PICTURES

OF

MEN, MANNERS,

AND THE

TIMES.

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OF

MEN, MANNERS,

AND THE

TIMES;

Interſperſed with

DESCRIPTIONS of the COUNTRY,

AND

RURAL ENJOYMENTS.

Written in the Year 1777.

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PICTURES

OF

MEN, MANNERS, and the TIMES, &c.

CHAP. XXI.

REMARKABLE DELICACY *of the* TIMES.

THE refinements in letters and in taſte ſeem to advance in proportion as a people decline in their morals, and in every quality that ennobles the human heart.

If we compare the manners of the peerleſs inhabitants of this country

to their notions of decorum, a dreadful incongruity will be the conſequence.

To bring this matter to a criterion, by which we can judge of it without prolixity or loſs of time, we will immediately advert to the extreme delicacy of the people of this age reſpecting our theatrical exhibitions.

The nicety of the feelings of the audience is carried to ſuch an extravagant length on all theſe occaſions, that one would think it would put a ſtop to the propagation of the ſpecies, and that the ſexes could not poſſibly be ſo indecent as to go to bed together, if the poſition was not entirely over-

balanced

balanced on the other ſide of the queſtion; and that it might as reaſonably be expected procreation would be ſuppreſſed by their actual debaucheries.

It is laughable to ſee a polite audience damn a poor devil of an author and his play for a trifling portion of indelicacy, which for the ſoul of him he could not help, when, at the ſame time, the hiſtory of gallantry never furniſhed matter of ſuch aſtoniſhing lewdneſs as the tranſactions of the preſent æra.

Our good grandmothers would ſit at one of Wycherley's plays, and laugh at his wit and his bawdy until

their ſides ſhook, and yet they were not half ſo remarkable for making cuckolds of their huſbands as the poliſhed females of theſe times, with whom the moſt trifling innuendo paſſes under the cenſure of vulgarity, and, on that account, is more inadmiſſible than the actnal commiſſion of the moſt lamentable of crimes,

Our forefathers would chuckle at a laſcivious conceit, but ſhudder at the idea of carrying it into execution, while their *poliſhed* progeny pretend to be ſhocked at the moſt trifling *indecency*, but make a *proſtitute* a neceſſary appendage to their retinue.

Theſe

Theſe inconſiſtencies of character, which muſt daily occur to every man in his obſervations upon the manners of the preſent times, can only be ſolved into ſomething like an old adage—that we are grown too indecent in our actions to bear with the leaſt ſemblance of them in the works of authors.

Hence we have ſentimental plays, without ſenſe or character; novels inapplicable to the manners of the age, and, in all other productions of amuſement, except where individuals are attacked, ſo prolific are we in our ideas of chaſtity, that nothing which

is marked with the exact likeneſs of our purſuits will be ſuffered.

This peſt of refinement, under the article of delicacy, will not admit of plain truths, exhibited in the indignant ſtyle of a ſatiriſt who feels what he writes, and who utters the genuine ſentiments of his heart. We muſt be tickled with our crimes; and every error of our lives muſt be touched with the pleaſantry of a joke, and in ſuch a manner as to prompt us to laugh at our faults, and to make us in love with the moſt inexcuſable of our tranſactions. The rod of ſatire muſt be tipt with velvet, ſo that the ſtrokes ſhall be ſoft and captivating,

and

and that the culprit, as well as the obſerver, ſhall be charmed with the flagellation.

Our poetry muſt be conveyed in a gingle of terms, ſmooth, harmonious, and ſweet, while the ſatire muſt be overwhelmed in a cloud of metaphors, and the moral require great pains and judgment in the reader to find it out.

In this chicanery of writing conſiſts the beauty of ſtyle, as exhibited according to the rules of refinement, and thoſe eſtabliſhed forms which meet with general approbation.

Our proſe muſt run in a regular ſtream of delightful periods. No offenſive or boiſterous terms, however neceſſary, muſt be admitted to deform the graceful tide. The deſcription of a ſtorm muſt, therefore, appear like an April ſhower; and the roaring of a flood as the murmuring of the gurgling rill. A bloody battle muſt lull you into a delightful repoſe; and an earthquake rock you to ſleep. The rattling of the elements muſt ſeem like the harmony of the ſpheres; and univerſal chaos as the diſplay of order and regularity. A fault in grammar, or an inadvertency of expreſſion, muſt be conſidered as a greater diſgrace to

a work

a work than a feebleneſs of thought, or a poverty of ideas; and the whole merit of a piece muſt be concentred in its CORRECTNESS.

Thus our refinements in letters, and in taſte, abſorb all the ſtriking powers and energy of language.

The ſhackles with which this peſtilence of refinement bind the powers of the mind, and the rules which are multiplied, *ad infinitum*, and which contract the efforts of genius within ſuch narrow and contemptible limits, are, no doubt, the cauſe of the preſent dearth of originality among the numerous productions of all kinds which are offered to the public.

In law caſes, whenever any thing which carries the appearance of novelty ariſes, great pains are taken by the learned judges to find out *precedents*; and if the ſearch fail them, they are all in the dark, and cannot tell what to make of the matter. This reſpect to *precedents* has the ſame effect on letters; for when any thing new, or out of the common track, makes its appearance in the world, the records are immediately ſearched, the ancients and moſt reſpectable moderns are ranſacked, and, if no authority can be gained by the inquiry, the author and his book are, of courſe, reprobated as a couple of illegitimates, and very gravely

gravely conſigned to the ſhades of oblivion.

Hence we have ſuch a multiplicity of performances ſo perfectly in the ſame ſtrain, that, bating the difference of ability in the different writers of them, there is not the leaſt glimmering of novelty in the whole. The tyranny of precept and example has ſuch a dreadful effect upon all adventurers in the manner and ſtyle of their productions, and they do ſo minutely copy each other in theſe reſpects, that the peruſal of a page or two of any one of them fixes your attention in the purſuit of an old ſtory, and affords you not the leaſt expectation of any thing

thing but what you have read of a thouſand times before.

We are not content with ſcourging to death every wicked wight who ſtarts up and ſtrives to outleap the bounds which we have fixed, by our glorious rules of refinement, for the meaſure of his flight, but we muſt fall foul of the godlike Shakeſpeare, and rob him of the greateſt of his treaſures.

Thoſe numerous and genuine pictures of nature, which he has given us in his portraits of the common people, muſt be expunged from his works, becauſe they are rude and indecent; and

and the grave-diggers in Hamlet muſt be baniſhed the ſtage, as a couple of vulgar dogs, unfit to appear before a polite audience, notwithſtanding their quaint jokes and rude manners preſent an exact picture of low life, and the ſcene itſelf one of the moſt bewitching ſpecimens of morality that ever was wrought by the human intellect.

That the real ſon of Shakeſpeare, who, with his magic powers of repreſentation, has exhibited the mighty bard to the world in all the glory of his genius, ſhould pander to the enfeebled taſte of the times, and baniſh Yorick's ſkull, and the inimitable reflections of the young prince upon it,

it, from a Britiſh theatre, is truly lamentable, and muſt have been occaſioned by an inadvertent freak of his fancy, catched from the poverty of the preſent taſte, and a forgetfulneſs of that reverence which was due to the ſuperior judgment of the great author to whom he owed the fulneſs of his fame.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXII.

EXQUISITE LUXURY *of the* AGE.

THE luxury of former times, we are told, conſiſted in hoſpitality. When roaſt beef, plumb pudding, and a hearty welcome was the mode, no refinements took place of rationality. No ceremony perched at the feſtive board, embaraſſing the gueſt with its meagre formalities. No rules of decorum plunged the viſiter under a load of reſtraint, and rendered him unhappy in the midſt of plenty. No tyranny of precedence durſt invade the

the eaſe and comfort of ſociety, nor obtrude its baleful influence upon the pleaſures of the banquet. Love beamed from the eyes of the chearful nymphs, irradiating all around, and giving the heart-felt zeſt to the jocund ſcene. Pleaſure prompt the jolly ſwains, and urged them to merry feats and active deeds. All was rapture, extacy, and delight. Mirth and good humour ſpread their downy wings over the treat, and reciprocal bonds of friendſhip ſprung from the revel-rout. The light-footed laſſes led up the ſprightly dance, and the enamoured youths tripped to the pipe and tabor. The ſpacious hall echoed to the lively ſtrains, and redoubled the notes of merry

merry exultation; while the aged ſires were engaged in recollective garrulous recitals, and tales of former times beguiled the fleeting hours. They marked the luſty ſwains and lovely nymphs, and quaffed to the well-remembered tranſports of the connubial bed. They bleſſed the riſing generation, and ſaw, with raptures ineffable, a future progeny ſpring from their former joys.

Thus innocence and nature, gaiety, delights, and tranſports, unknown to our dull feaſts, tempered and enlivened the luxurious banquet; while Virtue, like an adamantine rock, ſtood before each guilty thought, and every vicious action.

Such were the manners of ancient hoſpitality, and ſuch the luxury of former times, as ſages tell, as poets ſing, and hiſtory records.

Before we endeavour to give the contraſt to the foregoing traits of the luxury of former times, as it is exhibited in the manners of the preſent æra, we cannot let ſlip this opportunity of intimating to the Reader the perverſeneſs and impetuoſity of our imagination, which, contrary to all the eſtabliſhed rules of diction, will, every now and then, when the ſubject of our contemplation fills our intellect with gay or violent ideas, riſe upon ſtilts, and

and produce in our ſtyle a medley of neither proſe nor verſe, ſo that it may appear to the refined ſpeculator unwarrantable, lawleſs, and confuſed. All that we have to urge in our defence is, that if the looſe and disjointed thoughts, thus incoherently produced, fill the mind of the peruſer with a lively diſplay of our ſubject, we muſt leave him to cavil at the means by which he acquired it, and reſt ourſelf ſatisfied that more propriety of ſtyle, and correctneſs of manner, might not anſwer the end and purport of our deſcriptions ſo perfectly as our ſudden and variegated flights; and that notwithſtanding the ſpecified incongruities in our language may be reprobated

by the advocates for regularity, we hope they will preſent our portraits to the beſt advantage, and in the moſt ſtriking attitudes of repreſentation.

In theſe bleſſed days the pleaſures of the banquet are confined within ſuch miſerable rules of decorum, that the mind, inſtead of giving looſe to the joys of life, and to that hilarity which ſhould naturally ariſe from the poſſeſſion of plenty, finds itſelf borne down and depreſſed by a load of ceremony and conſtraint, which contracts the human heart, and deſtroys the very eſſence of convivial ſcenes and all the ſocial powers.

To

To a man not initiated in the mode of enjoying the good things of this world, as it is practiſed by the polite and luxurious, and who, conſequently, would wiſh to follow the dictates of nature, nothing can poſſibly be more dreadful than the idea of a feaſt.

As we would not mean to deal in paradoxes, we will reſt this obſervation upon the ſuffrage of a great majority of our countrymen, who, we are well appriſed, will join with us in the complaint, and conſider the participation of the banquet, as it is generally conducted amongſt the ſublime aſſemblies of the faſhionable world, as a terrible misfortune.

In order to illuſtrate the ſubject of our preſent lucubrations, ſuppoſe we conduct an honeſt gentleman, to whom the cuſtoms of the great world are unknown, and who, at the ſame time, poſſeſſes a diſpoſition perfectly in uniſon with the comforts that ſpring from a plentiful table, and the pleaſures which naturally ariſe in conſequence of it, through a regular ſcenery of that parade which preſides at the luxurious board of a man of faſhion.

The man of nature is invited to dine with the man of faſhion. He arrives at the gates of the decorated manſion.

manſion. He ſpeculates the gay lawn in front of the houſe; and wiſhes to enjoy the winding walks of the adjacent ſhrubbery. He contemplates the far-extended woods, and wants to partake of their ſhades and cool receſſes. Nature in theſe enlivening ſcenes offers her ſtore of delights, and anticipates in the mind of her ſon, an aſſemblage of her charms which he fancies will be diſplayed in the approaching feſtival.

With theſe gay-boding expectations, and with a heart as light as a feather, he advances to the front of the hall, and expects to meet his hoſt and the family, with pleaſure and eſteem in

their countenances, congratulating themſelves upon the honour of his viſit, and the happineſs of his company. He finds himſelf miſtaken. He thinks it very odd; but is well aſſured that ſome croſs accident has prevented the matter. He ſteps up, pondering, and conſidering, until he reaches the entrance of the ſpacious manſion. He wonders the family did not ſee him all this time, and is aſtoniſhed at the behaviour of the ſervants, who croſs the court and paſſages without noticing him in the leaſt degree, except now and then, with a caſual look aſkance, intimating curioſity and contempt. With a mixture of diſmay and indignation, and a ſlight

a ſlight reflection or two upon the dreadful contraſt between the reception he gives his own friends, and his preſent ſituation as a viſiter, he adventures to call aloud for the maſter of the houſe, and to announce the occaſion of his being there.

This very neceſſary buſineſs being executed, he has the mortification to find that it ſerves only to increaſe his embarraſſment; and that the ſervants, inſtead of running, neck and heels, for their maſter and miſtreſs, as he expected they would do, very gravely demand his name, and, without the leaſt ſeeming hurry or confuſion in their deportment, leave him to his own contemplations.

After waiting for a conſiderable time in the higheſt perturbation of ſpirits, a gay footman returns, and with ſomewhat more civility in his mode of expreſſion and addreſs than the reſt, offers to conduct him to the place of his deſtination.

He obeys the ſummons without heſitation; but is much aſtoniſhed to find, on his entrance into the next apartment, a ſtrapping domeſtic, fixed like a ſtatue againſt the wall, and ſeemingly meditating upon nothing very good or deſirable. Upon his advancing ſtill farther he encounters another ill-looking dog, exactly in the

the ſame poſition as the former, and begins to ſuſpect that the ſervants mean to play ſome trick with him. Before he can recover from his ſurpriſe, he is uſhered into a large aſſembly of powdered fops and emaciated beaus, meagre as the ſhrivelled hag, and frightful as the midnight ſpectre. He ſtands aghaſt, confounded and diſmayed, and fancies himſelf devoted to ſome dreadful calamity; while, with ſupercilious politeneſs, the very reverſe of true urbanity, he is offered a place in this myſterious temple. He takes his ſeat and wonders where he is, and what is to become of him. He cannot perceive the hoſt, nor any tokens of feſtivity. He obſerves a

ſtrange

ſtrange ſpecies of ſalutation paſs from figure to figure, without any cauſe for ſo much courteſy. He liſtens to ſome intermitting flaſhes of converſation, but cannot make out any point in view, nor deviſe the mode in which they are expreſſed. Every object appears to him unnatural and conſtrained, and he loſes, in the contemplation of theſe heterogeneous animals, the pleaſure which the examination of the human intellect affords.

He turns his mind to inward cogitation, and proves to himſelf that trees are converſable, that groves are eloquent, and that his cattle have more

more meaning in their manner, expreſſion in their look, and rationality in the whole tenour of their conduct, than the preſent company.

Juſt as he has determined this point, and acquired reſolution enough to wait the event of things and circumſtances, the gay maſter of the houſe appears, in all the pride of precedence, and vanity of addreſs; while our hero is ſuffocated with aſtoniſhment and indignation, at his receiving but one ſlight ſcrape of the foot, embelliſhed with a grin, and that only at a diſtance, as a ſufficient teſtimony of a hearty welcome. He wiſhes himſelf at home, and curſes his

his folly for leading him aſtray; but finds that the more he ſtrives to diſengage himſelf from the difficulties that ſurround him, the faſter he is bound by the ſhackles of conſtraint.

Since things are as they are, and he perceives, to his great mortification, that he muſt go through with the ſcene, and that there is now no receding from the adventure in which he had embarked, he wiſhes to tranſact the buſineſs with ſome degree of propriety, and ſtrives to modulate his deportment to the humour of the company; ſtamping, at the ſame time, in the inmoſt receſſes of his heart, a fixed determination never to ſuffer himſelf

himſelf to be drawn into ſuch another ſcrape, ſhould the Indies be offered to him as a compenſation for the ſacrifice.

Theſe thoughts and reſolutions having reconciled, for the preſent, our hero to his ſituation, and compoſed, in ſome degree, the diſorder of his mind, he enters into the nature of this new ſtile of feſtivity with a better grace, and cuts no contemptible figure in the circle. He begins to ſmile at thoſe innovations in manners which at firſt made him angry, and marks the progreſſive ſteps to the ſummum bonum of all things—the dinner, with preciſion and temper.

He

He makes ſuch compariſons between the demeanour of the preſent company, and that kind of behaviour which his own ideas and recollection offer to him, as might be expected on ſuch an occaſion, and from ſuch a viſiter.

There being no poſſibility for a man to render himſelf, by his converſation or talents, reſpectable in theſe poliſhed aſſemblies, our hero finds himſelf at leaſure to make his comments undiſturbed.

He reſumes his place affectedly, and ſits in a pſeudo-elegant poſition; but is ready to burſt with the idea of his

his new-modulated figure. He ſtiffles the riſible emotions as well as he can, and feels the conſequence which his firſt attempt gives him in the aſſembly, to whom the *manner* of doing any thing ſuperſedes the thing done, and gives the greateſt importance to the moſt trifling or ridiculous tranſactions. He perceives the *idea* of the Graces to have affected the graceleſs, and to have produced in the outward behaviour of the moſt notorious debauchees the affectation of delicacy. He is ſtruck with the effeminate mode of addreſs, and liſtens to the liſping accents of the company. He finds that they have nothing to ſay to each other; and perceives the attempt is

made only to captivate the ſenſes by the *exquiſite* poliſh of their demeanour. Their vacant ſmiles and dimples, their delightful approaches and retreats, their graceful circumſpection with reſpect both to time and place, and the ſtrict caution which is obſerved not to incommode each other upon the important buſineſs of paſſing and repaſſing from their ſeveral ſeats, together with the ſweet apologies that are made after every miſtake of the foot or the body, afford our hero a rich fund for contemplation, and rivet him in the farther inveſtigation of the ſcene.

He

He collects himſelf into the ſmall compaſs of an individual that has nothing to do in the ſociety but to ſit ſtill, and whoſe thoughts are very differently engaged to thoſe of the company. He acknowledges, in his reveries, that the eaſe and comfort of each other, in all parties, eſpecially of pleaſure, ſhould be conſulted in a general and moſt extenſive ſenſe; and that there is a certain *etiquette* in the performance of the offices of civility, which diſtinguiſhes the gentleman from the clown, and which embelliſhes every action of the liberal and ſuperior order of the human ſpecies; but he cannot perceive the leaſt tokens

of the accompliſhed gentleman in the multiplied and ridiculous formalities which operate in the preſent aſſembly, and which have plunged him into the moſt unmerciful ſtate of dependence.

Inſtead of traverſing the room at liberty, he finds himſelf fixed in one ſpot, and unable to exerciſe any powers, except his thoughts, which he might employ with as much freedom in a priſon.

The conſtraint which prevails on all ſides makes the company appear to him like an aſſembly of devotees, entirely at the will of the hoſt, and dedicated to the performance of ſome

ſacred rites in honour of his ſuperior dignity. He finds himſelf under ſuch abſolute tyranny of example, that to deviate an inch from the moſt limited line of action would draw upon the tranſgreſſor the moſt unbounded cenſure and diſguſt. He cannot, for the life of him, help laughing at his being ſtationed amongſt a ſet of decorated ſtatues; and is obliged to hide his face and his emotions, as well as he can, from his brethren in captivity, leſt the diſcovery ſhould end in his deſtruction. He is ready every minute to burſt out of the room, and at all adventures to ſeek for liberty in the fields. He begins to grow wretched and

deſpondent, and bemoans the loſs of thoſe joys and comforts which he experienced in the ſociety of his friends.

Where, ſays the man of nature, is the good and generous *Philotas*, and his family, that waited with anxiety for my arrival at his feaſt, and conducted me, exulting and delighted, to his company? Where are thoſe rational and benign beings, who received me from the hands of our gracious hoſt with the endearing marks of cordiality; and who ſtrove with genuine acts of civility to make me happy, and to ingratiate themſelves in my eſteem? Where is that eaſe and

and politeneſs which, without ſeeming to controul the company, kept up the neceſſary rules of decorum, and eſtabliſhed the fulleſt idea of reſpect, without invading the remoteſt conception of independence? Oh! ſhocking reverſe, exclaimed the man of nature, I am impriſoned in a gaudy manſion amongſt a gilded collection of ſlaves, without the poſſibility of ſpeaking one rational ſentence, or changing my place in the room, but at the riſk of being deſpiſed by the moſt deſpicable of the human ſpecies.

In the midſt of theſe reflections, and at the time his craving appetite is on the brink of inflaming his

paſſion, and urging him to aſk for a ſupply, even at the hazard of being condemned as the moſt vulgar dog that ever was admitted to the exquiſite delights of waiting with a ſet of ſtiff formalities two hours beyond the uſual period for a dinner, the alarum-bell rings, the *gentleman* to the *gentleman* appears, notice is given that the feaſt is ready, and the moſt ridiculous diſplay of precedence operates, on all hands, in the momentous march from the preſent ſcene of our hero's lamentations to the luxurious banqueting room; where the feaſt and nymphs of the houſehold are prepared for the reception of the devoted train.

On

On the entrance into the ſtately apartment, which is executed by each individual with a circumſpection that borders upon ſuperſtition, the man of nature is aſtoniſhed to find that the lady of the manſion muſt have been at home long before his arrival, notwithſtanding he had never heard her mentioned by the company, nor perceived any tokens of her exiſtence. He is ſtruck with diſguſt and regret, on his attempting to pay her his devoirs with the genuine marks of an open heart, to find that ſhe very ſlightly notices his approaches, and leaves him to fall into his place in conformity to the preceding preciſe

and

and nicely-regulated mode of deportment.

The lady and the ſmirking nymphs of her train, take the head of the board, and begin the labour of eating. The lord of the feaſt is ſeated at the bottom; and the gueſts are fixed on each ſide. The diſhes are numerous but undiſtinguiſhable; and not a morſel of plain food is to be perceived. The peſtilence of cookery has expelled the natural juices from every piece of meat upon the table, and ſubſtituted in their room the refined admixture of extraneous and unwholeſome ſauces. The natural flavour of every kind of animal ſubſtance

ſtance is totally abſorbed by the ſtrong and poignant reliſh of the ſtew-pan and its ingredients; ſo that none but acquired and debauched appetites can partake of the feaſt with any degree of ſatisfaction.

The genuine food of man, in every branch of it, is contaminated by preparation, and there is no difference to be perceived in the taſte of the different articles upon the table, but that which is given them by the cook. A piece of rotten mutton, therefore, will make as good a diſh, upon the ſcheme of *made diſhes*, as the fineſt haunch of veniſon in the kingdom; and a limb of a cat will do as well for a nicety,

as

as the leg of a rabbit; there being no ſpecific criterion by which you can diſtinguiſh the food you are eating, ſo entirely is it diſguiſed by preparation and pernicious ſauces.

The man of nature ſurveys the table, but ſees no food that ſeems to to be deſtined for the human ſpecies. He obſerves the company are helped in their turn, but cannot make out what it is they are going to devour. He ſtifles his ſuggeſtions, until, after long waiting and much anxiety, a plate of ſomething is offered to him for his peruſal. He turns the contents of it over and over again, but is farther off the inveſtigation of the matter

matter upon every trial of his ſkill. He adventures to adminiſter a part of it to his mouth, and, at all hazards, to run the riſk of being poiſoned rather than to incommode the ſtrict regularity of the ſcene before him. His palate takes the alarm on his firſt attempt, and his feelings co-operate in the attack. His ſtomach revolts at the contaminated morſel, and his appetite ſickens at the proſpect. He caſts an hopeleſs eye about him in ſearch of the rich *ſirloin*, that noble emblem of ancient hoſpitality, but finds, to his utter confuſion and diſmay, the glorious gueſt which uſed to decorate the head of the table, is now baniſhed even the ſide-board.

No

No reſources being left him, he makes a virtue of neceſſity, and, out of the numerous articles, all totally new and inſolvable, which are offered to him, he picks, and picks, until he has compleated the arduous taſk of eating in ſtate, without the ſatisfaction of gratifying the calls of nature.

During the long intervals which the different courſes create, he animadverts upon the ſcene, and calls forth the powers of reflection to compenſate for the total annihilation of every other enjoyment.

He

He ridicules in his mind the prepoſterous parade of the entertainment, and the unconſcionable length of time it takes the gueſts in the diſpatching of a meal. He perceives nothing but a profuſion of expence, without one ſalutary diſh upon the table. He obſerves luxury in the moſt pernicious ſenſe of the word, and calculates the amount of the treat to an enormous ſum. He ſees an hecatomb of hot and corroding dainties, more coſtly than as many oxen; and remarks that the extravagance of the banquet, in expence alone, is the prevailing object with the hoſt. He laments, with a falling tear that impends upon his

manly

manly cheek, the dreadful effect which this refinement in manners muſt have upon the future welfare of his country, and ſighs for the fate of poſterity.

He caſts his eyes over the ſervants that entirely encircle the table, and perceives their cloaths to be much more coſtly than their maſter's, and that the upper ones, more eſpecially, have as much the appearance of gentlemen, not only in their dreſs, but in their behaviour, as the company.

Amidſt the many and various paſſions which alternately agitate the breaſt of our hero, he cannot help giving

giving way to the riſible emotions, on his noticing the exact conſanguinity which there appears in the manners of the man of faſhion and his gentleman. So nicely do they ſeem matched, in every reſpect, that it is impoſſible to diſtinguiſh the maſter from the man, by any other criterion than their different offices at the table. So contemptible are the manners of a gentleman when they are reduced to any particular mode, or faſhioned by the reigning habits of the times, that a fellow without brains or education can put on the character, and wear it with as much dignity as a lord.

The man of nature ſighs at the cloſe of his reflections upon this part of the ſcene, but feels a ray of comfort flaſh upon his ſpirits, as the monſtrous collection of waſte and extravagance is removed from before his eyes.

The treaſures of the garden, and the luſcious fruit of the vineyard, together with the rich-flavoured juices of the pinery, which ſupply the place of the ſolids, and decorate, in the greateſt profuſion, the deſert, give freſh matter of animadverſion to the mind of our hero.

He

He partakes of thoſe real dainties with a very good grace; and, except from thoſe feelings which denote to him their pernicious qualities to a conſtitution not inured to them, he is very well ſatisfied with the regale. As the glaſs begins to circulate, he gives credit to the delicious flavour of the wines, but finds they do not ſit well upon his ſtomach; and is not at all ſurpriſed at the meager appearance of the company, which he attributes to their contaminated food, and the ethereal quality of their liquor. He longs for a bowl of *October* to warm his bowels; but as that old friend to hoſpitality is baniſhed,

with his boon companion the *ſirloin*, from amongſt theſe poliſhed ſons of feſtivity, he ſupplies his place, occaſionally, with a glaſs of Madeira, which is the only ſubſtantial ſpirit upon the table. He begins to wax warm, and to chaſe from his mind the traces of his former vexations. He ogles the female figures at the head of the table, and thinks of a thouſand things concerning them; but juſt as he fancies himſelf to have arrived to the ſummit of delight in the participation of their ſprightly converſe, and the jollity of a merry freak, or a jocund dance, with all the appurtenances thereunto annexed, lo! the lady of the manſion riſes, the company take the alarm,

and

and our hoſteſs, with her nymphs, leave the room in all the ſtate and formality of a gilded train of puppet, wire-conducted queens.

The man of nature is confounded: he makes an effort to follow them; but finding himſelf wrong, and that the men fall immediately into their ſeats, he follows the example, and waits the impending manœuvres, which appear to him ſo myſterious and unnatural.

A new ſcene of horror takes place of the preceding calamities in the breaſt of our hero. He finds the curtain is dropped, the reſtraint is

now at an end, and the company diſplay their real characters. He perceives himſelf to be amongſt a ſet of debauchees, who reciprocally diſcover their diſaſters in the wars of Venus, and ſpeak of the moſt voluptuous, and monſtrous ſcenes of life, with an effrontery and indifference ſhocking to the moſt diſtant idea of delicacy and decorum. He looks upon them as poor creatures who pretend to that noble character of the gentleman, which is not to be ſupported without dignity of action, and honour of principle. He is ſhocked at the meanneſs, poverty, and depravity of their converſation, and curſes their baſe and unmanly purſuits. He is

fortunately

fortunately diverted from giving immediate tokens of his diſguſt by the entrance of a train of lackies with the card-tables; and finds exerciſe enough for the dreadful uproar of his paſſions in his remarks upon the enſuing ſcene.

All conſtraint and conformity is entirely over with the man of nature. He has loſt all deference for the man of faſhion and his gueſts, in the diſcovery of their principles and their profligacy. He flatly refuſes to play, and ſtays but to be convinced of their being a ſet of pick-pockets and gamblers.

The avidity with which the different groups ſeize the weapons of deſtruction, the monſtrous ſums which are ſtaked upon every ſhuffle of the cards, and the ruin which awaits the unfortunate at the tables, preſent a ſcene to the man of nature truly diſtreſſing. He ſhudders at the vice and folly of the company, and leaves it, abruptly, with the moſt glaring marks of his indignation and contempt.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXIII.

BLESSINGS *of the* CARD-TABLE.

IN former days the card-table was never introduced, nor even thought of, but at Chriſtmas; when it appeared for a ſhort ſeaſon only, and ſerved as a merry gueſt to enliven the hours of feſtivity. It ſupplied the place of the tabor and the dance, and added variety to the ſcenes of mirth and jocularity. It gave the nymphs and the ſwains the opportunity of exerciſing their talents and temerity over the ſprightly game of *loo*, and afforded

afforded the laugh, the gibe, and the jeſt, to the jocund circle. The laſſies, arch and demure, knew how to create the *fluſh*, and the youths ſcrambled for the *pam* which lay concealed amongſt the petticoats of the fair-ones. The ſum which was ſtaked bore no part in the conteſt, but joy and exultation was the prize; while the old bachelors, and the ſhrivelled *tabbies*, preferred the ſober game of whiſt, and raiſed the laughable ſquabble over the loſs of the rubber, and the monſtrous ſum of ſixpence.

As the country grew polite the card-table became faſhionable, and occupied a ſhare of the ſummer amuſe-

ments

ments in the poliſhed aſſembly. Games of addreſs and dexterity ſuperſeded the ſimplicity of the old ones, and the ſtake became the only object in view. Hilarity was baniſhed the board of chances, and painful anxiety ſat brooding over the fate of the game. The ſordid paſſions took the alarm at the conſequence of the riſk, and Avarice preſided in the circle.

This innovation in manners, on its firſt appearance, gave occaſion to ſo much cenſure, and proved itſelf ſuch an unnatural intruder upon the entertainments of ſociety, that it was a long time confined to the pleaſure parties

parties of the great, and condemned by the reſt of mankind as a moſt pernicious and contemptible enjoyment.

Notwithſtanding all the oppoſition which the card-table met with from the natural feelings of mankind, as the annihilator of converſation, and the deſtroyer of merryment and jocularity, yet the influence of the *hydra faſhion* overpowered every other conſideration, and it ſoon became the general and moſt acceptable gueſt in all companies of genteel reſort. The furor of example ſpread itſelf like a peſtilence over the land, the card-table ſupplied the place of every other amuſement, and with regret and indignation

dignation let me add, that it is at length arrived to the exalted eminence of being the plague and diſgrace of this country.

The poor and deteſtable attendant upon the ancient goſſips, and the cold and unimpaſſioned reptiles of ſociety, the poverty of whoſe talents, and the inſignificancy of whoſe characters, could not render them acceptable in the ſprightly and animated ſcenes of pleaſure, engages, in theſe delightful times, the entire attention of the moſt exalted of the human race, ſullies the wreathes with which fame encircles their brows, and plunges them into the moſt diſhonourable courſe of life.

The

The miſerable influence of the card-table, and the prevalency of habit and of example, have at length excited a new ſpecies of magnanimity in the opinion of our men of genius. To riſk immenſe ſums upon the diſplay of his vaſt abilities at the game of *piquet* or *all-fours*, or upon the exquiſite diſcernment which is neceſſary to accompliſh the aſtoniſhing enterprize of producing the beſt trump before the applauding circle, is the criterion by which the gentleman diſtinguiſhes himſelf from the clown, and the mark at which he aims in order to acquire the glorious eſteem of his compeers.

The

The intrepidity of a man of rank and fortune in ſtaking the value of his eſtate upon the fate of a game of cards, or the turn of a die, is ſuch a burleſque upon the valour and dignity of the gentleman, that one would wonder how it was poſſible for ſuch a pitiful paſſion to enter the heart of the moſt prepoſterous blockhead upon earth.

To be the dupe of a villanous tribe of gamblers and pick-pockets, who have had the addreſs to advance themſelves into the *beſt companies*, and the practice of cheating into a reputable ſcience, is perfectly new in its nature,

nature, and one of thoſe refinements in polite life for which we are indebted to the card table, and which will for ever ſtand as an indelible ſtigma upon the towering creſt of the man of faſhion.

To ſee ſuch numerous examples of the ruin which attends upon the practice of gaming, in the moſt promiſing of our youth of rank and fortune, who pretend to keep up the reputation of the gentleman, by purſuits which diſhonour and contaminate the very eſſence of the character, is truly ridiculous; and demands the coercion of the law, and the rigid powers of government, to put a ſtop to the contagion,

tagion, by the ſalutary application of the pillory or flagellation.

Peace be to theſe poor ſouls, who, led on by the peſtilence of example, and the manners of a filly and profligate generation of coxcombs, have ruined themſelves and families in ſupport of this falſe idea of the gentleman, and in the god-like temerity of riſking their thouſands amongſt a ſet of ſharpers: let contempt and beggary be their reward. We mean not to add the dart of ſatire to the ſting of remorſe, but only to warn the unwary by the terror of example; and, if that will not avail, to prove, by precedents, and the ſuffrage of

every man of real honour in the kingdom, that gaming, except for trifles which bear no weight in the conteſt, is truly characteriſtic of the ſordid vagabond, who has not one grain of the gentleman in his compoſition; although it has been and ſtill may be practiſed, through the all-powerful influence of cuſtom, by the moſt liberal of mankind.

Were it not for ſuch characters as the generous and undeſigning, who have not ſufficient ſtrength of mind, nor magnanimity of independence, to withſtand the ſlaviſh compliance with the ruinous habits of the times, there would be no gulls for the ſharks to devour,

devour; no ſharpers to prey upon the credulity and weakneſs of the nobly born and bred; no gamblers to grace the delightful aſſemblage at our watering places; no crouds of well-dreſſed nobodies that nobody knows to dignify and adorn the faſhionable ſcenes of high life, nor any but gentlemen, and men of reputation, to be ſeen at the public ſtations of polite and general reſort.

As the caſe now ſtands, the baths aud pleaſure parties of the rich and luxurious are the markets for all ſorts of undertakers and adventurers, who flock to theſe ſcenes of diſſipation like hungry beaſts of prey in ſearch

of whom they may devour. They appear as wolves in ſheep's cloathing, are careſſed and fondled by the admiring circles, fleece at will the ſilly and undiſcerning, and compoſe the moſt reſpectable part of theſe monſtrous and diſcordant collections.

If that which has been frequently urged be true, that men of reputation really fall into the practices of the neceſſitous herd of gamblers, who cannot exiſt by any other means than what is termed their wits; and that the firſt characters in the kingdom are abſolutely as deep proficients in the over-reaching chicanery of the ſcience as the regular profeſſors, and make

make the ſame uſes of their knowledge as the meaneſt of the tribe, why then we have a truly noble generation of nobles, and the Engliſh gentleman is a pitiful character.

The card-table is now the only reſource for amuſement in all aſſemblies, either public or private. It is entirely ſyſtematical. Every other ſpecies of entertainment is exploded; and high betting, great riſk, and monſtrous loſs and gain, is become characteriſtical of the Engliſh mode of ſpending the hours of relaxation.

Hence our public rooms appear like ſo many collections of decorated

monſters, intent and ſharp ſet upon the deſtruction of each other. The numerous tables which promiſcuouſly fill the ſpacious halls, ſeem like ſo many centres of misfortune, and the ſurrounding parties as the eager purloiners of pelf. The certain and indelible property which every individual enjoys from inheritance, or the bleſſings of honeſt induſtry, is graſped at with the ferocious talons of a beaſt of prey, and ſeized without remorſe. No ſprightly joy ſprings from the various conteſts but that which is derived from another's woe, and "grins moſt horribly a ghaſtly "ſmile."

The

The numerous parties at the card-tables which decorate our public rooms of faſhionable reſort, look ſo much unlike the ſemblance of mirth and good company, that they ſeem, as they really are, different circles of enemies who are ſtriving, with all their fineſſe and powers, to pick each others pockets. Dreadful anxiety ſits brooding upon the brow of each individual: impending loſs or gain produces a ſhocking diſplay of the moſt ſordid of the human paſſions, and exhibits a ſtriking contraſt to the pleaſures of ſocial life.

The terrible effect which the card-table has upon the idea of female ſoftneſs and gentleneſs of manners is truly lamentable. It abſorbs the very eſſence and lovelineſs of the woman, and changes the portraits of beauty into the figures of miſchief and artful deſign. It gives them the ſemblance of furies, prompt by lucre to ſell the birthright of their native innocence and ſimplicity. The maſculine powers which are exerciſed in the proſecution of gaming diſtort the female face, defile the delicacy of the ſex, and change the angelic forms of youth and beauty to the likeneſs of hags and ſprights; and produce ſuch a pro-

profligateneſs, and vicious turn in their deportment, that borders too much upon the proſtitution of their charms to bear a farther diſplay of the grievance.

So extenſive and forcible is the prevalency of example, that the vicious practice of gaming pervades all ranks and orders of his majeſty's ſubjects. Tradeſmen and ſhopkeepers catch the contagion: they bet their fifties with aſtoniſhing temerity, and boaſt of their being polite and exceedingly clever in the publication of their loſſes. As theſe fellows know the value of money, they ought to be ſet in the ſtocks, upon every tranſ-

greſſion,

greſſion, for their folly, impudence, and preſumption.

The principles of gaming are derived from the motives of avarice and the meaneſt of the human paſſions. The incentives for wagering, in any manner, concentre in the wiſh to deprive another of his money, to reduce him to diſtreſs, and to exult over his loſſes and his ruin; to add to the crime that of rioting in his fortune, by the fate of chance or foul play, and to raiſe a tranſient ſource of happineſs upon the miſery of a neigbour.

The principles of the card-table are beggarly, illiberal and criminal; beneath

beneath the character of the gentleman and the man of honour; and meet only for the aſſociated thieves, and profligate plunderers, of ſociety—the GAMBLERS.

Mean and deſpicable is the paſſion for the card-table. It annihilates every virtue of the human mind, and calls forth the moſt ſordid emotions into action. It fixes the keen and ſharp-ſet eye of the villain upon the fortunes of his friend, and hardens the heart againſt the calamities which it produces. It overturns the claims of equity, and ſtamps falſe principles of honour in the breaſt of man. It baniſhes

baniſhes all the exquiſite feelings which dignify our ſpecies, and eraſes ſoft pity, good-will, and tenderneſs, from the affections. It imprints the indelible marks of avarice and impoſition upon the countenance of its votaries, and proſcribes the bleſſings of confidence from ſociety. It excites enmity, malice and ſtrife amongſt the ſons and daughters of pleaſure, and creates a pick-pocket, gloomy war in the hours of feſtivity. It is productive of nothing but perfidy and miſchief, and is carried, in theſe unworthy times, to ſuch an extravagant length, that it requires the ſevereſt tokens of wrath and contempt,

tempt, from the exercise of the scourge of law as well as the rod of satire; to chace the vile pestilence from the community.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXIV.

CAUSES *and* EFFECTS *of* CORRUPTION.

TRULY entertaining is the application of the mind in the buſineſs of purſuing the regular progreſs of thoſe refinements which take place in a community on every advance from its obſcurity, until it arrives to the ſummit of its power and perfection, to that particular criſis which determines the boundary of its greatneſs, and from whence, as nothing in this world continues in a ſettled equilibrium,

brium, it declines of courſe until it ſinks into oblivion and contempt.

The blazing communities of Greece and Rome, which form ſuch a conſiderable part of ancient hiſtory, are now extinct; and no traces beſides their ſtory are to be found of their exiſtence, except a few ſcattered monuments of their fame which the inſatiate thirſt of the antiquary produces, by ranſacking his brains and the bowels of the earth for his proofs. Catacombs, amphitheatres, and temples lie buried beneath the ſpiring edifices of the preſent generation, till ſome happy concuſſion of Nature involves the whole in one general ruin,

to

to the great joy and comfort of the adventurous inveſtigators of antiquity.

That Old England has had its beginning, has advanced through many ſtorms and tempeſts to a ſuperior degree of eminence, and that it muſt fall ſome time or other, like its predeceſſors, into the compoſition of a ancient ballad, to amuſe and paſs away the time of future generations, is certain; all hiſtory gives the ſanction to the prognoſtication, and the preſent manners of its inhabitants proclaim aloud its impending fate: but whether it is arrived to its criſis of power and proſperity, to that point which muſt determine its proceſs, and from

from whence it muſt recede and precipitate, we will leave to abler caſuiſts to decide; declaring it as our opinion, only, that notwithſtanding the propheſies of a moſt diſaſtrous race of ſtate-mongers who infeſt this country, and who are vicious and hardy enough to ſwear with all their might and main that Great Britain is at this moment upon the brink of deſtruction, and that it is impoſſible ſhe ſhould hold up her head for the ſpace of a month to come, yet we do not believe a tittle of the matter; but are fully ſatisfied, within our own breaſt, that ſhe is ſtrong and vigorous; that the æra of her declenſion is at a great diſtance; that ſhe will bear many ſhocks more

calamitous than the war of America before ſhe feels them; and that we are in great hopes the preſent throes and ſtruggles which ſhe experiences, will ſerve only to rouſe her profligate ſons out of that ſupineneſs of manners which marks their courſe of life, and which is the ſole grievance that ought to engage the attention of patriotiſm, and the only preſent intimation of the future downfal of this nation.

Thus having traverſed the boundaries of two enormous empires, ſettled their riſe and declenſion, and all in the courſe of a page or two, we will advert to the entertaining employment, as we termed it in the beginning

of

of this chapter, of marking the ſteps by which the refinements in manners advance in proportion as a community proceeds towards the ſummit of its greatneſs and perfection; and which, as we have moſt ſagaciouſly obſerved at the cloſe of the laſt paragraph, is a matter of the higheſt importance to the patriots; ſince it will exhibit, in ſpite of all their clamours againſt the wickedneſs of miniſters, who are, *perhaps*, as wicked as themſelves, the only direful tokens which at preſent denote the approach of our deſtruction.

As to wars, this country has been engaged in the moſt bloody and fatal,

time out of mind; and on occaſions much more dreadful in appearance than the preſent: ſhe has riſen from her conteſts the arbiter of contending empires; and found herſelf recreated, happy, and proſperous after every the moſt arduous of her enterprizes. War, in a freeborn community of animated Britons, has ever been the ſource of our power, wealth and magnanimity; and can never be the cauſe of our ruin, unleſs we diſpoſe of our birth-right, by pandering to the effeminate and extravagant luxury of the times, by battling in the ignoble conflicts of the card-table, inſtead of charging the whole aſſemblage of all the powers upon earth, and by falling into the neceſſary

neceſſary conſequence of our depravity —that of the corruption of our morals, the total ſubverſion of our veneration for ourſelves, and the puſillanimity attendant upon debauched principles, abandoned purſuits, and thoſe contaminated, illiberal, and degenerated maxims which encroach upon the mind, on its receding in the leaſt degree from the genuine principles of honour.

It is allowed on all hands that luxury has been the bane of all the powerful nations in the world; and though there is nothing new in the idea, yet the particular ſtate of this country demands the exertion of every

individual, ſo diſpoſed, to remind the community of that which has been the caſe in former times, and which appears to threaten the like calamity to ourſelves, from the rapid progreſs of our refinements in every ſpecies of extravagance and debauchery.

As we would not wiſh to tire the patience of the reader, in proceeding minutely over a beaten track, which has employed the judgment and labour of the moſt correct and aſſiduous of the human ſpecies to render it plain and commodious for the moſt heavy of the journeyers through life, we will reſt our obſervations upon the ſubject

on

on the recollection of our cotemporaries; and leave them, with a few remarks, to their own concluſions; to thoſe proofs within the compaſs of their own experience and remembrance, which are much more powerful and convincing, than all the hiſtorical accounts and acute reaſonings in the world.

This country ſeems to have riſen ſuddenly into grandeur and magnificence, if we eſtimate the proofs of the poſition by the articles of luxury, which are generally and unfortunately the attendants upon the glory and importance of a nation.

The articles of luxury we conceive to conſiſt of equipage, retinue, and the expenſive refinements of the table. All theſe within the memory of a middle aged man were confined to a very inconſiderable part of the community; and have increaſed in the courſe of thirty or forty years, until they are become the general characteriſtic of the kingdom. Gay carriages, laced ſervants, extravagant entertainments, which would have appeared more frightful in the eyes of our fathers, than ghoſts or hobgoblins, are grown the common neceſſaries of our exiſtence; indiſpenſable appendages to the high-mettled ſtate and con-

condition of every inconſiderable tradeſman in the land! Thoſe ſtreets in our country towns which thirty years ago had uſed to groan under the heavy burthens of waggons, and cars of buſineſs and traffic, and which ſeemed to liſten with aſtoniſhment to the light-timbered wheels of a gentleman's poſt-chaiſe, are now entirely engaged in the conveyance of whole trains of decorated vehicles, which rattle over their pavements in gaudy parade, and which are kept by the manufacturers, in ſupport of their dignity and conſequence in polite life.

The affectation of pomp and parade is grown ſo prevailing, enchanting, and

and delectable, among the middle order of the people, that a new ſpecies of gentry ſtart up from the day-book and the ledger every day, confront the ancient nobility of the land, and cope with the firſt characters in the kingdom for elegance of taſte, and all the appendages of family and fortune. So apt are the numerous adventurers, that whip from the counting-houſe to the villa, in their imitation of polite life and genteel profuſion, that you cannot diſtinguiſh the tradesman from the peer, except by certain tokens of primæval meanneſs, which, in ſpite of fate and proſperity, will ſhow themſelves occaſionally, and appear to the learned caſuiſt more dreadful

dreadful than the dancing bear in embroidered habiliments, or the clown of fortune aping the eaſy carriage of the well-bred gentleman.

That riches, either hereditary or acquired, are at the diſpoſal of the poſſeſſor in what manner he likes, and that the mechanic may aſſume the gentleman, keep his coach and ſix, his villa, and his whore, may ſneer at the pretended ſuperiority and precedence which mark the manners of people of faſhion, neglect his concerns in merchandize, and ſpend all he has, is a truth not to be controverted; but it muſt be allowed, at the ſame time, that the ſatiriſt has an equal

right

right to laſh the procedure, to condemn it as abſurd, miſchievous in its tendency, and by no means the proper characteriſtic of the man of buſineſs, who never appears to half the advantage as when he is engaged in the multiplicity of his concerns, and in the ſimple, unaffected hoſpitality of a good ſubſtantial table, a ſet of ſober domeſtics, with himſelf at the head of the feaſt, the rough ſon of Toil, untutored but in the ways of commerce, unlearned in, and ridiculing, the foppery of the faſhionable world.

That this was the character of the Engliſh merchant, within the compaſs of a few years, the reader's recollection and

and experience will evince, and that the very contraſt of it is the character of the preſent race of tradeſmen, we need only to appeal to their manners for a proof; ſo that the inference which we mean to draw from theſe premiſes, diſcovers, in the cleareſt light, the luxury of the preſent times in oppoſition to former days; and proves, upon ſelf-evident principles, that the rapid progreſs which elegance and politeneſs, profuſion and diſſipation, have made in the manners of the main body of the people, looks more like deſtruction in the face of this country than the whole force of the United Provinces, with the powerful empires of Europe, in joint league,

league, and terrific aſſemblage, hovering upon our coaſts.

Luxury enervates the body, debilitates its powers of exertion, and renders it unfit for martial exploits, and the arduous enterprizes of the field. Its effects upon the mind are ſtill more dreadful. It baniſhes the active motive from the breaſt. It eraſes the purſuits of glory from the affections, and concentres the paſſions in the gratification of ſordid and unmanly pleaſures. It debaſes the intellect, deſtroys the faculties, contaminates the ſenſes, and plunges its votaries into the moſt deteſtable of all calamities which can damn a country.

It

It explodes the principles of honour, proſcribes all concern but for the preſent moment, annihilates the morals, and ſinks mankind under the preſſure of CORRUPTION.

Thus our rapid refinements in expenſive pleaſures, our taſte for delicate amuſements, and all the effeminacy of polite life, and poliſhed manners, are the indubitable cauſes of that corruption which we ſpecified as the firſt part of our ſubject in the title to this chapter, and to which all our preceding obſervations bear witneſs.

The effects of corruption operate in a community, or the body politic,

in the ſame manner as they do upon the human frame. They produce in a country a ſeparation of the parts which conſtitute the very eſſence of its powers of life, vigour and exertion, and conclude in the total diſſolution of the whole.

The grand ſymptom by which this diſeaſe of a ſtate is aſcertained, conſiſts in the heedleſsneſs of its members about its dignity, its conſequence, and its fate; in a total diſregard to that love and veneration for one's native land which always inſpired the breaſts of heroes and of patriots, and which never was baniſhed from the hearts of a people, but ruin, contempt, and beggary

beggary was the conſequence. It is marked by a people having no concern for the welfare of their country, laughing at the idea of poſterity, and hugging themſelves in the confined felicity which ariſes from the conſideration, that the preſent times will ſerve the period of their own exiſtence.

The ſubordinate ſymptoms, amongſt many thouſands more, by which we denote the effects of corruption upon a community, are exemplified in a people giving up their country upon all occaſions, and the leaſt appearance of danger; in their endeavouring to perſuade one another that they are ruined, utterly undone, loſt to all

intents and purpoſes, and devoted to immediate deſtruction, upon every foreboding appearance of calamity.

As theſe baſe and ignoble principles cannot be infuſed into a ſociety but by the moſt cowardly and vicious of the human ſpecies, we will beg leave to cloſe this chapter with a warning to our countrymen againſt the wicked efforts of a monſtrous gang of deteſtable miſcreants, who, under the ſpecious pretext of alarming the minds of the credulous with notions of a deſpotic exertion of our mild and happy government, and influenced by the very ſpirit and quinteſſence of CORRUPTION, are ſtriving, with all their might and main,

main, to draw this nation into the abominable diſgrace of giving up her dignity, of ſubmitting to her pretended fate, of pandering to the haughty claims of her offspring, and of conſidering herſelf as a poor, vile, weak, and ruined aſſociation of animals; not capable of exiſting as a body, but by ſufferance, and unworthy to be named in oppoſition to other ſtates and empires, but with contempt and deriſion.

CHAP. XXV.

COMPARATIVE VIEW *of* FRANCE *and* ENGLAND.

THINK not, gentle reader, from the pompous title to this chapter, that we are going to enter into an elaborate detail of the various circumſtances which mark the ſpecific difference between this country and France, as they are exemplified in the general hiſtory of both. No, we ſhall not perplex our head, nor that of the peruſer of our *traits*, with any thing like ſuch a terrific combination of matter.

matter. We mean only to produce ſuch caſual reflections upon the luxury of the French, and the effect which the manners of that ſprightly generation of coxcombs have had upon the cuſtoms of the Engliſh, as may anſwer the ſublime purpoſe of giving a farther illuſtration to the ſeries of obſervations which are contained in the preceding part of this volume.

The French ſeem by nature, their climate, or by manifold cauſes that would create an excellent fund for acute inveſtigation, to be deſigned for empty ſhow, for laughter without mirth, for parade without conſequence, and for all the appendages to the joys

of life without any of thoſe exquiſite feelings which accompany real and ſubſtantial pleaſures. They ſeem to be a people that are always upon the heyday of jocularity, but never in the actual poſſeſſion of true merriment. Their vivacity appears to be the effect of an exploſion of the affections, rather than a conſequence of them; and the regular flow of ſpirits which they ſupport upon all occaſions, gives a material ſanction to the poſition.

From this principle which we have advanced concerning the French, it follows of courſe that they are luxurious and diſſipated ſyſtematically; but the paſſions not being in the leaſt degree

degree engaged in the cauſe, their exploits centre in oſtentation only, and their expence in the purſuit of pleaſure bears no proportion to their affectation of magnificence.

The French have been the ſource of foppery, frolic, and amuſement, to the different ſtates of Europe for many generations; and if any thing but laugh, volubility, and finery, with a neceſſary mixture of frippery and parſimony, had attended upon their purſuits, they would have arrived, before this time, far beyond the criſis of their glory and ſtrength as a kingdom. But whatever effects their effeminacy may have had upon them-

ſelves as a community, they have drawn their neighbours into ſuch an imitation of their manners, that there does not appear to be much danger in the peculiarity of their ſituation.

The frippery of the French, with their ſhirtleſs ſleeves, and terrific depth of ruffle, their ſhabby finery, and the meanneſs of their attire, has been the ſource of much ſtage wit to this country, and the ſubject of general ridicule amongſt the indignant ſons of England for many and many years. We had uſed to laugh at every fopling that appeared to adopt the modes of France, and to ſhout at a Briton in the habiliments of that kingdom.

Baboon

Baboon and monkey were the moſt gentle epithets we could poſſibly beſtow upon an imitator of the French taſte in dreſs and manners; and nothing appeared ſo contemptible in the eyes of the natives of this land, as an Engliſh beau faſhioned by the hands of a Pariſian taylor.

This ſtubborn ſpirit of our countrymen; this natal diſlike to gaudy decorations; this innate diſguſt of the French manners is, at length, utterly ſubdued; and all degrees of our people copy minutely the moſt extravagant fopperies exported from the Continent, and conform entirely to the hideous ſpectacles which daily arrive

arrive under the article of French faſhion.

One material circumſtance remains in the manners of the Engliſh which denotes our difference from the French. We retain our primæval taſte for ſubſtantial entertainments and attire, and have added all the poliſhed luxury and whimſical finery of the Gallic nation, at ten times tenfold their expence. The rage of imitation carries us into the moſt extravagant ſcenes of profuſion, both in dreſs and manners, which the French affect only. Our paſſions are engaged in the purſuits of poliſhed life, and we expend immenſe ſums in the ſupport of it, while

while they are content with the display of luxury without the terrible conſequences annexed to real magnificence: but in time, it is to be feared, we ſhall be obliged to copy them in every reſpect, and to ſupport our glorious refinements in the French taſte and manners upon the meagre fabric of affectation and beggary.

Luxury has often been defended as the friend to commerce; and no doubt while a people can ſupport their expenſive pleaſures and coſtly modes of life, trade will receive manifold advantages from the creation of numerous imaginary wants which elegance, taſte, and refinement produce. Luxury, when

when it gets a footing in a country, travels with exceſſive velocity, pervades all ranks of the people, and from the time of its ſetting forth until it arrives to that barren precipice where Poverty ſtands with hollow eyes and ſhrivelled trunk, ready to receive the giddy, fluttering tribes, nothing can be conceived ſo ſprightly, nor ſo flouriſhing as its devotees; nor any thing ſo proſperous as the ſons of art, manufacture, and commerce, that pander to the high zeſt, and magnificent reliſh, of the times.

Luxury ſinks a community in a general diſſipation of manners; and the gentleman, the merchant, and the tradeſman,

tradeſman, together with the main body of the people, plunge themſelves into the gulf of extravagance. Individuals upon individuals, ruin their fortunes in the purſuit of pleaſure; every perſon of every denomination, lives up to the full ſtretch of his circumſtances; the tendency operates upon the community at large; gains ground every day; the amazing fluctuation of property flies to diſtant climes; a general poverty enſues at home; commerce loſes its ſupport, and debility, contempt, and ſlavery, cloſe the ſcene.

That this is the fate of effeminacy, refinements in taſte and elegance, and that

that profuſion, extravagance, and exceſs, which always attend upon poliſhed manners, and the improvements of a people in luxury, all hiſtory furniſhes too many lamentable teſtimonies to need any farther proof of the poſition: and though it is our opinion that this country is at preſent at a great diſtance from the period of its glory and ſtrength as a nation, yet our rapid progreſs in the flimſy embelliſhments of polite life, indicates, but too plainly, that we are conſiderably advanced upon the direct road towards the point of our declenſion.

For manifold convincing proofs of this aſſertion, we muſt refer the gentle reader

reader to his recollection of our preceding obſervations upon the ſubject, and his own experience of the matter; having it in our contemplation at preſent, only, to exhibit a few more facts, by way of doing juſtice to the court of France, for the wonderful and generous aſſiſtance which it has, from time to time, given the ſons of Britain, in their ſprightly march towards the gulf of their deſtruction; as likewiſe to ſhow the ſurprizing powers of imitation which are diſplayed by the natives of this land, in their conformity to the god-like precepts and examples, exported from the ſource of foppery, with ſuch ſpirit and alacrity.

Not

Not many years ago the effeminate manners of the French began to operate upon the cuſtoms of the Engliſh.

Our giddy youths of fortune, who were ſent upon their travels for improvement, uſed to return ſpectacles of mirth and ridicule to the general inhabitants of this country, in conſequence of their having gained nothing by their tours but an adoption of the French taſte in dreſs and deportment; and it was happy for them if they could peep from behind the curtain at the playhouſe, without getting their bones broken in the attempt.

attempt. Time, and numerous adventures, in the imitation of the Gallic refinements, reconciled our countrymen to the appearance of the baboon-like repreſentations of the human ſhape; and they have at length become ſo familiar to the Engliſh, that the difference is ſcarcely diſcernible between a Britiſh beau and a French marquis. It is true that a ſpecies of reptiles ſtarted up, ſome time ago, under the denomination of Macaronies, ſo beſigured and bedizened, that they excited much contempt and indignation in the breaſts of the gaping and confounded ſpectators, and were moſt admirably depicted by the ſons of the pencil: but whether

 theſe

theſe ſublime geniuſes borrowed their exquiſite mode of dreſs from the French faſhions, or were vain enough to ſet up for themſelves, it matters but little in the preſent caſe, as no figures, be they ever ſo prepoſterous and ſhocking to the eye of real elegance, but what are now ſupported in all aſſemblies throughout this kingdom with impunity; ſo that it reſts incontrovertible that we have taken the example in the article of dreſs, as well as in our effeminacy of manners, from the court and kingdom of France, though we may have improved upon the archetype to ſuch an extravagant degree, as to appear more hideous and frightful than our neighbours.

The

The delightful poliſh of our youth is grown, all of a ſudden, ſo prevailing among all orders of the people, that there are no modeſt, plain-dreſſed gentlemen, nor ſhopkeepers, to laugh at that ſilly animal a beau, which uſed to make ſuch ſport in a Britiſh aſſembly. We are all beaus, and worſe than macaronies, and the more extraordinary the figure of an adventrous fop, the more he is careſſed and admired in the gay circles of pleaſure and diſſipation.

So ſoft, tender, and gloſſy do the beſpeckled adventurers in dreſs appear to the touch and to the eye, that a

female muſt be ſtrangely altered if ſhe can think of manhood when ſhe contemplates the oppoſite ſex, or poſſeſs the leaſt idea about the propagation of the *human* ſpecies.

Nay, our gentlemen are grown ſo delicate and refined, that they have invaded the province of the ladies. They decorate their charming frames with the moſt gaudy ſilks and ſatins which they can purchaſe, and ſhame the fair ones in all the flimſy effeminacy of habiliment. So fluttering and ſo delightful do the Britiſh youth appear in their embroidered ſuits of ſilk; ſo happily effeminate in their dreſs and deportment, and ſo nicely concordant

is

is the delicacy of their figures and their manners, that nothing in this world can be half ſo expreſſive of all the ancient ideas of the female ſex, as a gay aſſemblage of the Britiſh youth at an opera, a play, or a ball.

How hard and cruel it would be to take theſe gaudy butterflies into the field of battle; to place them in the midſt of ſwords, guns, and trumpets; to ſtun their tender ears with the clamour of embattled hoſts; to oppoſe their embroidered breaſts to the dreadful bayonet; to caſe their tender limbs in *worſted hoſe*, and to oppreſs their lovely bodies with the weight of *cloth*: Heaven forefend that

this ſhould be the caſe, both for their own dear ſakes and that of their country! except the preſent bluſtering times of danger rouſe them from the lap of Folly and Diſſipation, which long peace and proſperity have rendered ſo bewitching and delightful.

Thus, bating one circumſtance only, that the women ſtill continue to wear petticoats, the ſexes have drawn ſo nearly together, with reſpect to dreſs and manners, in their approaches towards that point at which the different genders become altogether indiſtinguiſhable, that the females have outſtript the males in the march, have paſt the point of coalition, have arrived

arrived on the oppoſite ſide of the line of ſimilarity, and appear, in their dreſs and deportment, much more like the tyrants of the creation, much more fit and proper for the arduous enterprizes of the field, and every manly exploit, than the preſent ſqueaking generation of animals that were formerly poſſeſſed of the prerogative of the rougher ſex, but are now conſigned to the more gentle offices of the toilet; have ſunk under the line which ſtamped upon them their ſuperiority; have no other token left them of their dominion but their breeches; and as thoſe, with every other mark of manhood, are at the diſpoſal of the ladies, the ladies of

this land are, conſequently, the lords of it, and the Britiſh gentlemen are, undoubtedly, the ladies.

To prove this poſition true, we will adviſe the reader to make uſe of his own eyes and experience, and to take a view of the portraits of the different ſexes, for we will be tried in this caſe by nothing but appearances, and we will reſt our plea upon his judgment, whether the women do not look much more like men, according to his idea of manhood in petticoats, than the preſent effeminate foplings who croud the face of this iſle; and who ought to be damned to all intents and purpoſes, if they preſume, after this

this notice, to continue any longer in breeches.

We are not without our ſuggeſtions that the violent aſſeveration at the cloſe of the laſt paragraph will ſtrike terror into the melting hearts of the feminine gentlemen of this land, and give great cauſe of offence to the poliſhed and refined taſte of the times; but we hope, as it was produced in the cauſe of the gentleman-like ladies of Old England, that they will not be ſhocked at the coarſe phraſeology of our warmth in their favour, ſince they are proved by it to have gained the ſummit of power and pre-eminence which has employed, time immemorial,

rial, if tradition ſay truly, the whole force of their art and their talents to accompliſh.

Tremble ye poor, ſhrunk, and ſilky papilios, that formerly were called men, and governors of the world, at the daring and terrific appearance of the lord-like ladies of this country, who have uſurped the reins of dominion, and ſunk you beneath the plumes of their protection, the tender and delicate charge of their proweſs and magnanimity. Contemplate the greatneſs of their ambition, and the poverty of your ſpirit, in the contraſt which is manifeſted by appearances on both ſides of the queſtion. Survey

the

the approach of a group of your conquerors, mark their maſculine ſtep, and the towering heap of matted and tremendous compoſition which riſes from the baſis of their *manly* heads; and braves the ſkies; looking in the face of the affrighted paſſenger more dreadful than the lofty helmets of the ancient warriors, more ſhocking than the ſcarified viſages of the barbarians, and more filthy than the ſun-dried, dungy matter upon the joles of the Hottentots.

Place yourſelves, if you may be permitted ſo to do, by the ſide of theſe heroic heroines of our country. Think of the dwarf-like figures which you

you cut in the compariſon; and bleſs yourſelves moſt heartily that you are not borne down or annihilated by the weight and conſequence of their aſpiring creſts.

The Amazons of old were puny and contemptible creatures in compariſon with the Britiſh fair, ſince they have taken upon them the manners of the rougher ſex; and an army of our countrywomen would, from their appearance only, ſtrike more terror into the hearts of a riſing race of Savages in full battalia before them, than all the improvements in war of cannons, bombs and guns!

What

What then has Old England to fear from her enemies? If our men are ſoftened into women, our women are *hardened* into men; ſo that ſhould the worſt come to the worſt, in theſe perilous times, and our foes increaſe and multiply upon us, we have nothing more to do but to prevail upon our women to advance upon them, in their preſent dreadful and gigantic mode of habiliment, and they will be ſure to *fright* all oppoſers to the power and dignity of Great Britain into peace and obedience.

This ſtrange and abominable figure of our fair-ones, eſpecially in the mode

mode of their head-dreſs, was exported from France, and has grown ſo tremendous in the eyes of true taſte and delicacy, that no ſeverity of cenſure and reproach, can poſſibly keep pace with the enormity.

The faſhionable tendency among the ſons and daughters of Britain of copying the French, is exhibited more ridiculouſly, if poſſible, in polite literature, than in poliſhed manners; for the productions of the preſs, which are eſteemed, by the *well bred*, to bear the marks of erudition, and grácefulneſs of ſtyle, are compoſed of the ſtrangeſt mixture of language imaginable. There conſiſts in our books

books of genteel entertainment ſuch a monſtrous medley of French and Engliſh, that an ordinary perſon that does not perfectly underſtand both languages, will be as incapable of comprehending the ſubject before him, as if it had been attempted in Hebrew.

Whether this exquiſite refinement in letters is beneficial to the authors of it, we will not preſume to determine; but we will be daring enough to pronounce, that it is horribly ridiculous; although many of the French words, with thoſe of any other language, may, perhaps, be naturalized to advantage in the Engliſh tongue.

The

The communication and intercourſe between this country and the Continent, may render the learning of the French language a neceſſary part of education to thoſe who are deſigned for public life, or general commerce: but the preſent rage for the acquirement of that tongue is not dictated by neceſſity, but the knowledge of it is looked upon as a polite accompliſhment, amongſt the votaries of the faſhions of the times, and conſequently it is eſtabliſhed upon the baſis of our imitation of the Gallic nation in every thing.

Hence

Hence our young women of ſpirit and faſhion muſt be taught French, though they are unacquainted with their mother tongue, and are unlikely ever to have any occaſion to make uſe of their heterogeneous learning, except, like all other dablers in unprofitable ſtudies, to appear ridiculous and troubleſome to ſociety.

We will beg leave to cloſe this chapter with a caſe in point, for the ſerious conſideration of the Frenchified ladies of England.

A beautiful young damſel, ſome time ago, threw at the peerleſs author

of theſe ſheets one of Cupid's javelins, ſo well and ſo forcibly directed, that it penetrated our flinty heart. She appeared to us, from the bloom upon her cheek, from her modeſt manner, and her downcaſt eyes, moſt lovely, moſt heavenly, and moſt bewitching. We were juſt upon the point of giving up ourſelf for loſt, when, all of a ſudden, ſhe began to jabber French; and then the ſcene was changed in an inſtant: her bloom appeared to us as paint; her modeſt looks as leers to entrap, and inſtead of the Engliſh virgin, we now thought ſhe had all the airs of a French coquet.

Shocking!

Shocking! exclaimed the peerleſs author of theſe ſheets; there is nothing natural in this girl; it is all affectation; nor does ſhe ſeem, at any time, to be actuated by her feelings, unleſs it be when ſhe is alone or in the dark.

CHAP. XXVI.

WINTER TRAITS.

NOVEMBER, with his drizzly load of impending vapours, and falling rains; with his gloomy, ſaturnine, ſluggiſh ſteps, hovering over the face of this iſle, like the evil genius of its inhabitants, making day hideous, and night melancholy, and prompting the deſpairing ſuicide to raiſe the dreadful poniard againſt himſelf, is, at length, baniſhed from the face of the earth.

The

The nipping breeze flies from the frozen north, faſtens upon the congealing waters, dries up and hardens the moiſtened plains, and braces the relaxed and ſhattered nerves of the ſons of men.

Joy lifts the ſoul aloft, the body bounds o'er the ſounding roads, ſeems to feel a total renovation, and braves the arduous enterprize.

The buſy, thoughtleſs boys ruſh to the ſhining pool, tempt the crackling ice, and glide exulting upon the ſurface of the waters; till, ſad miſchance, fatal as it is lamentable, ſtops

their mad career, and the mother moans her drowned and beſt-loved ſon.

Intenſe, ſevere, and cold, the froſt ſets in, and deeply penetrates the porous earth; forming a firm and glaſſy ſubſtance o'er the gay canals, that ſtands the ſhocks of hoſts of ſprightly youths, in playful frolics, various and confuſed.

The adventrous ſkaters, poiſed on ſharp-edged ſteels, wave in graceful circles o'er the tranſparent plain, deſpiſing mean purſuits, and all the flimſy paſtimes of the timorous fops.

The

The hovering fieldfare, with wings and legs benumbed, ſcarce dares the ſhortened flight, though preſſed by hot purſuers: feeble and heedleſs he cackles from hedge to hedge, till death o'ertakes him in the unfriendly brake.

The ſkimming larks, in buſy crouding flocks, ruſh round the large and open field; and after many a doubtful pauſe, ſtill riſing and ſtill falling, and waving ſtill another and another circle, at laſt, adventrous, fluttering, graceful, light. The panting gunner, crouching low, breathleſs and creeping o'er the ſtubble, and marking well their perked-up conſcious

heads, at length, or as they riſe, or as they, thoughtleſs, peck the ſcanty meal, lets fly the ſcattered ſhot. The eſcaping birds, ſtunned with the burſt, flee various and confuſed, while the ruthleſs ſavage ſeizes on his prey, intent and eager for the next purſuit.

The timorous horſeman chaffs the fretted ſteed, that pants and foams along the ſlippery road; trembling and ſtepping o'er the treacherous ice, like mincing laſs that dreads the impending fall.

The breathing footman ſkips o'er the rugged path, pitying, and jeering as he heedleſs bounds, the miſerable plight

plight of ſighing, ſhivering, downcaſt, ſtumbling traveller, who, mounted on his frighted hackney, feels the horrors of approaching fate.

Clear and tranſparent grows the ſettled atmoſphere, which ſeems a ſhining adamantine plain, as fixed and brilliant as the richeſt gem, but large and glaring as the god of day. The wondrous orb that lights the earth, ſeems one continuous flux of rays that gives but to receive redoubled luſtre from the radiant world. Mellowed and ſoftened is the ſun into a commixed diffuſive range of mild and glorious influence. The hardened ſurface of the earth reflects his enfeebled

powers

powers with ſuch accumulated force, that ſeeming conflicts riſe between the ſun and planets, which ſhall gain the palm of brilliancy and grandeur.

The rugged roads and paths are ſmoothed by frequent paſſage. The winter nymphs, more lovely than the ſummer dryades, diſdain the help of fire, and ſeek for health and warmth in the adventrous walk. At firſt they, ſhivering, creep along the plain, pale and half-ſtarved with fear and nipping air; till ſoon the accelerated blood ruſhes impetuous through their veins, painting with crimſon die their poliſhed cheeks, and ſending the heart-felt rapture to the admiring ſwains.

Gay

Gay and delightful is this happy ſeaſon that gives to humankind the elaſtic powers, and ſhames the ſummer months with joys more firm and ſtable. The riſing fogs that hover o'er the earth during the peaceful night, and cling around the leafleſs boughs and branches of the trees, and hedge-row fences of the fields, are cryſtallized againſt the morning's riſe to ſuch a rich diſplay of figure and contexture, as makes the ſun to bluſh at his own exploits, in giving radiance to the enamelled world that far excels himſelf.

As

As all things paſs away, and changes ever wait upon the ſons of men, in this their variegated ſtate of joys and griefs, of plagues and comforts, and all the mingled happineſs and miſery that alternate take their courſe, ſtern Boreas uſhers from the north a thick and ſettled gloom, that, ſpreading far and wide, at once o'erſhades the lively, ſprightly, blithſome ſcene of ſeeming never-fading luſtre; and the world is inſtantaneouſly involved in deep, ſurrounding, dark and dreary melancholy.

A pauſe of expectation and diſmay brings on at laſt the whifling fleecy tribes

tribes of congealed and flaky waters, white and flimsy as the down o'th' swan, but cold and chilling as the disdainful shafts that pierce the rueful lover when his mistress frowns.

All comfortless the traveller appears a frightful spectre; while the clinging snow infolds his body, and waves in one continued transverse flux of varied, broad, and thickening concourse; loading and lighting the saddened earth with a deep and dazzling substance.

The aching sight, at once offended, sees no distinctness in each ghastly object, and dainty lasses, in their best attire,

attire, ſeem frouzy drotchels, meet for much cleanſing in ſome limpid brook.

The fierce and cutting north wind riſes, and drives before it hoſts of pelting ſnows, that fret the embarraſſed journeyer on his way, and falling raiſe againſt the obſtructing hills huge heaps in figures curious and romantic: or, paſſing furious o'er the nodding heights, are ſnatched in eddies down the retiring vales, and ſtop, with vaſt collected drifts, the courſe of commerce and the adventrous traveller.

The world being thus involved in deep and vivid horror, and all the

wide,

wide, extenſive plains being one continued glare of painful, chilling white, no tranſports riſe but from the crackling fire, and never-failing, hoſpitable board. The warm and ſparkling hearth, the winter tale, the humming ſpirit, and the ſprightly dance, make Boreas join in chorus at our doors, a welcome gueſt thus fenced from farther miſchief. He roars in vain, no entrance will be given, ſave when he rudely ſhocks the ſhuddering ſinner that ventrous dares the opening of the portal.

In this ſharp cutting time how hard the fate of poverty and want. No comforts ſpring to fence againſt the harſh

harſh ſeverity of cold, nor any joys to meliorate the ſeaſon. The dreary cottage ſeems a wretched hut, where breathes, in agonizing pains, the worthieſt of our race. The uſeful members of this wicked world ſeem ſhrunk beneath the chilling blaſt, unpitied and deſpiſed.

The lovely red-breaſt, with ſharp, imploring eye, receives the ſcanty portion of the deſerted hind. When chilling froſts and ſnows drive all the needy ſons of want far from the ſtately hall, the robin ceaſeleſs plies the humble roof, and picks the friendly offering of the pitying ſwain. There he reſides, and tunes his little throat,

and

and whiſtles all the live-long ſummer day in grateful membrance of his winter friend.

The ſhy and conſcious crows, the wily magpies, and the adventrous kites, grown tame and heedleſs by the inclement ſeaſon, approach the environs of the farmer's fold, and, hovering in the air, or ſitting ſtupid on the neighbouring trees, or gathering cloſe in cluſters round the herds, are ſhot for paſtime by unfeeling man, while they implore protection and relief.

The warm and cheering barn, the thraſher and his flail, the winnowed chaff that flies promiſcuous round,

exciting pleaſure in the mind of man, and giving comfort to the ſtarvling beaſts, that ſpeak their meaning in their peaceful plaints, draws fluttering round the little feathered tribes to ſnatch the bleſſings which are thrown away. The inſidious ſhrape is ſcattered in the fold, the eager warblers, crouding, ſnap the bait, and while they, thankful, peck the plenteous meal, the horrid miſcreant ſends the thundering death, in idle ſport, and wanton murderous rapture.

The timid hare, without one friend on earth, that meets no effort but to take its life, in this ſad ſeaſon finds a lone retreat, and, covered with a height

height of ſnow, lies liſtening under-neath. However well apprized, it fails in all its guiles, ſince unrelenting, cruel man and beaſt, alike in vice as in their natures baſe, purſue its printed ſteps; and, marking well the orifice which ſprings from where the victim breathes, at once deſcend and drag the creature forth. The ſtruggling, helpleſs, inofenſive thing pierces the air with cries that ſting the ſoul, but ſavage man can liſten and deſtroy.

As humankind, e'en in the worſt of times, can turn misfortunes to ſome good account, and pleaſurable ſcenes will riſe from barren waſtes, the

hardy youth make ſport with nature's ſhocks, ruſh rapturous through her chilling drifts of ſnow, and moulding well the hard, concreted ball, engage in battles ſprightly and tremendous, whilſt ruddy laſſes pelt the weaker ſide, and tender foplings ſhudder at the conflict. Happy the nymph that hits the unconſcious boor, who, gaping, jeers the fate of grappling foes, nor thinks of ſnow-balls levelled at his head. All white and foaming ſtrive the embattled hoſts, till victory decides the jocund combat, till, covered o'er, the youths are whelmed in ſnow, and laſſes feel the trickling drops ruſh down their panting breaſts.

So

So fares this harſh and cruel ſeaſon, and ſuch the general exploits which mark the manners of this nipping time; and while the chilling blaſts rage o'er the barren earth, a gleam of comfort warms the teeming mind in contemplation of the coming ſpring.

The north wind ceaſes; a milder breeze impels the ſoftening vapours which, from the ſouth, pervade the flinty earth. The dripping icicles ſoon loſe their keen ſupport; the melting ſnows increaſe the river's tide; the ice grows rotten, melts, and dies away; the world unlocked, reſumes her wonted form, and all the drizzly,

dropping, ſplaſhy, ſluggiſh times, that drench this ſpongy iſle, renew their varied courſe, till ſpring returning cheers the drooping land.

Thus limps the winter on; and thus our hobbling proſe ſtumbles unſeemly o'er the rugged ſeaſon!

CHAP.

CHAP. XXVII.

PROGRESS *of* SCANDAL.

WINTER, with his wet, uncomfortable, ſhortened days, gives the lengthened evenings, produces the warm fire, affords the quaffing hours, the ſocial converſe, the joys which ſpring from mutual friendſhips, from tales and merry meetings, from dreary nights changed to convivial ſcenes, from mirth-moving frolics, ſprightly hilarity, convulſive laughter, from muſic that charms, impels, and meliorates the paſſions, and from the

ſerious, contemplative pleaſures that mark the manners of the wiſe and grave.

In this ſeaſon old goſſips neſtle round the fire, and pull down reputation better than their own. The young ones too, envious and ill natured, vent their ſickly ſpleen againſt each luckleſs laſs that bears the prize of beauty and of grace.

The gaping mouth, the goggling eye, the inclined and liſtening ear, the poſture bending forwards, denote the fell, devouring fiends, that join in ſavage circles, and tear the laurels from the envied brow. Up ſtarts the ready

ready lie; the comfort-giving imputation foul, though falſe and black as Erebus, finds a paſſage quick, and gains the general ſanction. The vicious turn that marks the manners of this wicked world, gives eaſy credence to the worſt of tales, but ſcarcely liſtens to the better ſide!

In former days ſcandal was the avowed occupation of the tea-table, and was confined amongſt ſuch trivial and worthleſs groups of idle tale-bearers, that its influence extended no farther than the environs of a village, or the circumference of a pariſh; but in theſe glorious times its progreſs is as rapid and miſchievous as lightning.

It

It flies from the point where it is collected to the fartheſt verge of the kingdom, and pierces the lonely habitation of the hermit.

Innumerable reptiles now make a trade of calumny, and ſupport themſelves and families by this dreadful occupation. They penetrate, like fiends of darkneſs, into the ſecret tranſactions of individuals, and frame out of them a monſtrous medley of traſh for the entertainment of the public. They ſting to the very life-blood the faireſt characters; they exaggerate and vilify the weaker ſide of the portrait, and their vile and deteſtable productions are the principal

cipal ſtudy and amuſement of the polite and faſhionable world.

The firſt news-papers for ſale and general acceptation, are thoſe which are remarkable for the propagation of lies and calumny; and no works of labour and genius afford half the profit to the bookſeller, as the trifling and illiberal productions of the day, which blaſt, in wanton ſport, the faireſt reputations, drag private perſons into public view, and load their characters with a weight of ſuch abominable filth, that nothing but the vicious and depraved minds of a degenerate and cowardly race of culprits could ſuffer or attend to with patience.

A total

A total ſubverſion of every principle of honour is exemplified in the preſent mode of propagating ſcandal. No regard is had to the injury done the object of it; no palliating circumſtances produced to ſoften the harſh and cruel treatment; nor any ſhadow of a reaſon given to the public for the attack. The private hiſtory of individuals, which has nothing to do with the public nor its concerns, is ranſacked by a ſet of harpies, and framed into quaint, ridiculous ſtories, for the ſublime purpoſes of turning a the penny, and gratifying the nefarious appetites of the illiberal peruſers; who are more culpable in giving

giving countenance to ſuch deteſtable productions, than the needy panders to their miſerable and impoveriſhed taſte.

Let the turbulent patriots, who are eternally exclaiming againſt the tyranny of government, caſt their dim and averted eyes upon the liberty of the preſs, and they muſt even through the thick gloom that perverts every object preſented to their ſenſes, perceive at once the folly of their complaints, ſince the licentious gang of ſcribblers that furniſh our daily intelligence, ravage indiſcriminately, the ſacred arcana of private character, hold up to public view the domeſtic tranſact-

tranſactions of individuals, and level their infernal ſhafts with the ſame careleſs eaſe and effrontery at their prince, as they blaſt the good name of the moſt inſignificant perſon in his majeſty's dominions.

The private anecdotes of our diſſipated youth, and our dotards, are brought to light, faſhioned into garniſhed tales for the entertainment of ſociety, and afford a very proper ſeries of matter, to diſgrace the annals of our country.

The firſt and the beſt characters in the kingdom are vilified and defamed in their private concerns, by this ungovernable

governable licence of the preſs, for the purpoſes, ſimply, of profit and amuſement; and nothing in this world can place in ſuch glaring colours the vicious taſte of the times, and the liberty of Engliſhmen, as the forbearance of government in this abominable practice.

Scandal, as it is now carried to ſuch an amazing height, ſerves only to render our countrymen callous to reproaches, and indifferent about their fame; ſince no virtues will ſecure any perſon from the baleful ſhafts of private malice, nor any precautions guard againſt the preſent avowed and daring propagators of univerſal defamation. The

The preſent grievance is a diſgrace to the community, and ought to be exploded even at the hazard of our freedom: for licentiouſneſs is more tyrannical and miſchievous than abſolute government, and reduces a country to the moſt perilous and abject ſtate of ſlavery.

Before we cloſe this chapter upon the progreſs of ſcandal, perhaps it may be neceſſary to ſeparate the province of the ſatiriſt from the encroachments of the defamer, according to our notions of liberty, under proper reſtrictions.

The vices and follies of mankind are the indiſputable objects of cenſure and ridicule. They compoſe the province of the ſatiriſt, and he has a right, from precedents, and the authority of the beſt and wiſeſt of the human race, to ſpare neither whip nor ſcourge, nor the moſt harſh and tyrannic efforts to draw them under his dominion, to cauſe them to tremble at his nod, the abject ſlaves to the terror of his ſway, and the devoted objects of his vengeance.

The true ſatiriſt is never perſonal in his cenſure. He may draw ſingle portraits that may reſemble to a tittle

the manners of innumerable individuals, but if he deſcend to fix the ſtigma of vice or folly upon one only, he becomes a lampooner; except in thoſe caſes wherein a private perſon launches into public ſcenes of life, and is amenable to the community at large for his conduct.

Under this exception we denote miniſters of ſtate in their official capacity; and men in public truſt, of all denominations, that regard the good or evil of general ſociety; but not in their domeſtic or private concerns, which ſhould be held ſacred with the ſatiriſt.

Leading

Leading men, and men linked together in ſeparate bodies from the community at large, ſuch as factions and the abettors of them, are certainly as much the objects of ſatire as the promoters of tyranny, and are generally the moſt dangerous enemies to a country; the main point of their drift being unalterably to weaken the powers of government, and to eſtabliſh themſelves upon the ſubverſion of the ſtate.

Factions, of all ſpecies, or bodies of men, are obnoxious to ſatire, ſince the very ſpirit of faction conſiſts in accuſation and cenſuring the conduct of others.

Philoſophers, poets, players, and authors of all degrees, are the objects of ſatire; but the player will never be attacked without his buſkins but by the lampooner, and the author will be ſecure from the ſtrokes of the genuine ſatiriſt in all things except thoſe which relate to his writings.

In ſhort, private character will ever be held ſacred with the ſatiriſt; except in thoſe caſes wherein the domeſtic tranſactions of an individual obſtruct, in a very ſingular and enormous degree, the general welfare of ſociety.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXVIII.

RAGE *of* CONTROVERSY.

PLAIN reaſon diſtinguiſhes, in a country untutored by refinement, the palpable objects of right and wrong; and a people, not warped in their judgment by diffuſive argumentation, ſeldom determine without preciſion and propriety; but when once the dablers in abſtract ſcience begin to ſpread their influence in ſociety, and the logician, the ſceptic, and the ſophiſt, acquire weight and conſequence in a community, the principles

of truth and falſhood, rectitude and error, with all the ſimple and eſtabliſhed rules for the well being of mankind, become vague, bewildered, and uncertain; a ſhade is caſt over the cleareſt truths, ſuppoſition is decorated with the trappings of conviction, and ſelf-evident poſitions are rendered abſurd and contemptible.

We need only to appeal for our proofs in this caſe to the notable and ſublime refinements of our preſent race of ſpeculators upon religion and politics; the firſt of whom having, to the diſgrace of human nature, explained away the abſolute neceſſity of the divinity, and providence, in the

the eſtabliſhment, and continuation of the univerſe; and the latter, much to the edification of Engliſhmen, have argued the point of civil liberty with ſuch unabating fervour of altercation, that it would take the life of man to follow them through their wonderful mazes of circumlocution, and more than the human intellect to acquire the leaſt ſymptom of knowledge from their labours, or to underſtand, in the moſt trifling degree, the nature of a ſubject ſo mangled and diſfigured by ſuch a dreadful tribe of impoſtors.

The reaſon of man, in theſe charming times of refined ſpeculation, is ſo tortured and confuſed in the in-

veſtigation of the cleareſt propoſitions, that there grows on each ſide of every ſimple queſtion in agitation, two monſtrous excreſcences, which entirely engage the attention of the cavellers, while the main body or trunk of the argument rots and dies away in the diſpute.

As men grow learned and acute in ratiocination, they deſpiſe the ſimple phænomena of nature: they reprobate plain truth and univerſal conviction as trite and contemptible; they eſtabliſh their tenets upon ſyſtems drawn from the chimeras of fancy, and ſeek for reputation in the mazes of uncertainty and conceit: they gather a cloud

cloud of metaphors round the firſt principles of knowledge, and reſt the full force and energy of their proofs upon hypotheſis and declamation.

There is a ſweet and fatal pleaſure which goes hand in hand with the improvements in abſtract ſtudies, that urges the mind of the proficient to launch from the beaten road, and to ſtrike out ſomething new for the purpoſes of engaging the attention of ſociety, and acquiring the reputation of ſingularity and preternatural excellence.

From this polluted ſource, which is contaminated by the vanity and perverſe-

perverſeneſs of the human intellect, rendered acute and preciſe by the labours of profound cogitation, is derived ſuch a multiplicity of terms and phraſes, and ſuch a length and terror of argumentation, in the voluminous works of the preſent race of ſophiſts, that the difficulty of gathering the ſenſe or meaning of their elaborate inveſtigations ſuperſedes every other conſideration; and the underſtanding is ſo bewildered in the tedious examination of words, that the aſſent or diſſent of the judgment entirely depends upon contingencies too vague and indeterminate for conviction upon the ſolid grounds of truth and perſpicuity.

There

There is a peculiar zeſt among our faſhionable philoſophers in writing grammatically unintelligible. They produce an extenſive ſtream of terms, moſt admirably arranged; but after the raviſhed and attentive reader has recovered from the trance into which the rolling tide has thrown him, and he begins to caſt his thoughts about him for the ſenſe, he perceives himſelf confoundedly puzzled, terribly at a loſs, and if he obtains a glimmering of real ſubſtantial matter in the courſe of the moſt delightful length of period, he is exceedingly fortunate.

Words were undoubtedly formed to convey ideas, and the more conciſe and explicit a writer is in his phraſeology, or the management of his terms, the nearer he comes to the ultimate end and purport of language: but the learned delight to perplex the underſtanding, by caſting the ſeveral propoſitions which they advance for the improvement of mankind in the mazes of intricate and indeterminate expreſſions, and in the ſhades of obſcurity.

This procedure is that which may be entitled the Parade of Science; and anſwers the purpoſe of keeping up the

the dignity of letters: for were you to ſtrip the maſk of pompoſity, and the terrific load of abſtruſe phraſeology which aggrandize the voluminous works of the profound in ſcience, from the real ſubſtance of their offerings for the benefit of ſociety, you would find that their folios might be reduced to pamphlets; and that the pamphlets, however excellent and cheap, would be deemed by the purchaſers very dear bargains.

But while the human race is to be tickled and delighted with the ſtrange and wonderful, the abſtruſe and incomprehenſible, the philoſophers are perhaps juſtified in gratifying the propenſity

propenſity of their patrons, by pandering to their taſte, and by affording them ſufficient entertainment in the laboured inveſtigation of NONSENSE.

The mode of writing we are deſcribing has gained ground in this country, in proportion to our refinements in every other ſpecies of luxury; for there is a luxury in our taſte for writing, as well as in our reliſh for the pleaſures of voluptuouſneſs, which has the ſame effect in both; and which equally enfeebles the vigour and energy of language, and the powers of the human frame.

From

From this ſource is derived that univerſal tendency of our countrymen towards argumentation. The rage of controverſy, which at preſent ſo viſibly predominates in the land, is owing to a race of ſubtile ſophiſts that has defiled the ſprings of truth and perſpicuity by a deluge of miſguiding terms, by concluſions drawn from falſe premiſes, and by ſyſtems built and ſupported upon the baſis of error and deceit.

All things, the moſt ſimple and ſelf evident, are now diſputed. The heroes of controverſy martial themſelves on the oppoſite ſides of every prevailing

prevailing ſubject, and tear the very vitals of truth and perſpicuity to tatters in the ſupport of their different tenets.

Victory is the ſole object with the preſent numerous candidates for fame in the turbulent ſcenes of controverſy, while the light of conviction is abſorbed or wreſted to ſerve the purpoſes of the various contending powers.

While the paſſions of men as they are, at this æra, excited by party, prejudice, and vanity, and the idea of overcoming the adverſary ſuperſedes all conſiderations concerning the real ſtate of the ſubject in agitation;

while

while truth and conviction are concealed by the arts of ſophiſtry, and the ſucceſs of the argument depends upon addreſs and impoſition; how is it poſſible that a people ſo miſled, ſhould diſcern the difference of right and wrong, or avoid the babbling cataracts of confuſion!

Read, if you have patience, the political productions of the preſent times, and you will find the above-mentioned poſitions verified to a tittle: you will perceive the art and chicanery which we have ſpecified to prevail in ſuch an enormous degree, that the main point of every queſtion is annihilated, truth and rectitude is

concealed from the public eye, and error and falſehood is eſtabliſhed upon the principles of logical fineſſe, ſcholaſtic deduction, vehement declamation, and the mere development of pragmatical quiddities, too flimſy, vague, and uncertain for the rational and determinate ſupport of one poſition in the political world. Trivial points are laboured and inſiſted upon as of the greateſt weight and importance; inſignificant appendages to the ſcience are made principals in the arrangement of facts, while the body of the argument, which ſhould be concluſive, is entirely neglected, or parcelled out into a ridiculous diſplay of never-ceaſing nonſenſe; the mind

of

of the peruſer is bewildered in the tedious purſuit of miſrepreſentation, in the regions of deformity and confuſion; and all the ſettled and invariable maxims which ſhould lead the human intellect to the clear fountains of unbiaſſed and genuine conviction, are diſfigured, disjointed, and contaminated; whilſt the preſumptive evidence, produced from chimerical propoſitions, is inſiſted upon, by our preſent race of politicians, as the ſource of truth, rectitude, and reaſon!

Politics was ever the favourite topic of a free people, and conſequently of Engliſhmen; who never were ſo free as at this time, if we may eſtimate

their liberty by the freedom of their debates: for the rage of controverſy is carried to the ſame exceſs, upon political matters, in all public ſocieties throughout every town in the kingdom, as in the ſublime works of our pamphleteers and news-writers, and bears an exact analogy in its conſequences with the productions of the preſs.

The ſtrange opinions concerning politics, as they are exhibited in public rooms of general reſort, are really diverting, and entirely concluſive with reſpect to our charge againſt the propagators of eternal and indefinite altercation.

Up

Up ſtarts one caſuiſt, declaring his ſentiments upon the affairs of the nation, and poſitively aſſerts that his opinion is right; then he is knocked down by another, of quite a different ſentiment, and who as poſitively lays in his claim for the right ſide of the argument; then another condemns them both, and produces freſh matter; then another, and another, all different and all right; till, at laſt, neither they, nor any body elſe, can tell what in the name of patience and good company they have been about!

CHAP. XXIX.

CHARACTER *of a* REPUBLICAN.

A GLOOMY, ſaturnine, ſanguinary principle agitates the breaſt of the republican. His ſavage eye darts malignant flaſhes of deſtruction at the ſprightly appendages of title and diſtinction, and he is at eternal variance with princely government, however it may be tempered by a neceſſary controul of the people. His reſtleſs ſoul is in continual broils with itſelf while the ſhadow of monarchy exiſts in a country where he reſides, and he is ſure

ſure to ſeek all opportunities to diminiſh the powers of the ſtate, and to cavil at the adminiſtration of the public concerns. The object which actuates his mind is the love of dominion, and he is a greater tyrant in his heart than the moſt abſolute monarch upon earth. His clamours for the freedom of his country are excited by the motives of ambition, and his only wiſh is to obtain the powers of controul over the generality of his cotemporaries. He cannot bear the moſt diſtant idea of reſtraint, and the regular ſubordination of good government is hateful to the arrogance of his feelings. He has no reliſh but for democratical confuſion, and the

proſpect of eſtabliſhing his own conſequence in ſociety upon the general diſſipation of ſound policy, and the univerſal ſtruggle for pre-eminence. He hopes to acquire a principal ſhare in the management of the public concerns, and he is ſure to uſe his power, if he obtain any, with the moſt inſolent preſumption, and all the tokens of the moſt unbounded tyranny.

The renowned city of *Athens* exhibited the moſt glaring inſtances of the forementioned principles of the republican. The generality of the people were in continual commotion to obtain the powers annexed to pre-

eminence,

eminence, and whenever any of them had arrived to the ſummit of command, they uſed it with ſuch arrogance, or were ſuppoſed to do ſo by the people, that the moſt remarkable amongſt them for ſway and abilities were brought to trial, condemned and executed by the general ſuffrage of the ſtate.

The people in this turbulent commonwealth had no ſooner ſet up an idol of their own creation, but their jealouſy and general thirſt for power urged them to beat down the object of their love and veneration, in order to make way for that univerſal claim to pre-eminence which inſpired

the

the breaſt of each individual in the community; and we find that the beſt and the wiſeſt among them, whoſe memories will be revered to the lateſt poſterity, and who were guilty of no crime but that of being great, were put to death by the voice of the people.

The hiſtory of Athens, ſo famed in ſtory, produces nothing more than a detail of the moſt turbulent ſtruggles for dominion among her ſons; and the conſequent viciſſitudes in her government were effected by the general claim and attempts of the inhabitants at large to ſupplant each other in the public offices of truſt, and in that

that ſuperiority and power which was derived from the adminiſtration of her affairs.

The ſtruggles for power and pre-eminence among the ardent ſons of Athens, excited them to the efforts of emulation: they improved themſelves with the greateſt aſſiduity and ſucceſs in thoſe particular ſtudies which pandered to their favourite thirſt for dominion; and as war was a principal department in their improvements, they have aſtoniſhed the admiring world with their exploits in the field of battle. The perſuaſive powers of language were no leſs neceſſary in their attempts to obtain their beloved ſupe-

ſuperiority, and they were exquiſitely eloquent upon the roſtrum, as well as powerful in the camp: but they were falſe, treacherous, and malicious; and the many inſtances of their baſeneſs and cruelty which they exerciſed upon the nobleſt productions of their country, will be an eternal ſtigma upon their character; and evinces, in the cleareſt light, that a democratical or republican government is productive of nothing but eternal broils, and all the miſchiefs which are derived from the violent paſſions of men, let looſe upon one another in the unbounded and univerſal ſtruggles for general ſway and ſuperiority.

Athens,

Athens, in conſequence of the ſtrenuous endeavours of her ſons to emulate the greateſt actions at that time in repute, particularly thoſe of war, in order to prepare themſelves for the firſt offices in the ſtate, to which they all aſpired, blazed forth among the ſurrounding nations like a peſtilential meteor, puſhed her influence, weak and trifling as ſhe appeared both in numbers and territory, to the fartheſt verge of oppoſition, repelled the force of PERSIA, and made the gaudy tyrant tremble for the fate of his vaſt and extenſive dominions; but ſhe ſoon vaniſhed like a noxious vapour: the paſſions of her people, while

while they were exerciſed in war and conqueſt, led her to the ſummit of grandeur and glory; but when once the rage of enterprize left her, the unſtable mode of her conſtitution plunged her into domeſtic diſputes; the paſſions of her people which had been long concentred in one point, and which led her to the nodding heights of renown, were diſſipated at once; ſhe became a prey to internal ſtrife and commotion; each individual counteracted his neighbour; the general harmony of the ſtate loſt its ſupport by contentions; the conſtitution, founded upon the baſis of a divided people, fell into anarchy, and ſhe became an eaſy conqueſt to every contending

tending power, until ſhe ſunk into a remarkable and moſt inſtructive ſtory.

The flaming riſe and precipitate fall of Athens indicates to mankind, that while the paſſions of all the individuals in a community, under democratical or republican government, are concentred in one point, and they jointly co-operate in the ſupport of a country againſt all oppoſition from abroad, the ſpirit of emulation which fires the breaſt of every perſon in a ſtate ſo determined, will produce wonders of proweſs, conqueſt and glory; but as all things veer and change about, and glory and conqueſt will have their period, no ſooner will that time arrive,

and

and the paſſions of the people are left to prey upon each other, in conſequence of their having no external object to engage the attention of the whole, than they diſſolve with the ſame velocity as they were amaſſed, and the country falls into obſcurity and contempt.

The conſtitution of POLAND ſtands upon the baſis of the moſt refined ſpecies of liberty that can poſſibly tickle the talents of the moſt ſublime and furious republican in this kingdom; yet painful to relate for the ſake of the wretched ſubjects of that country, it was always the ſcene of every calamity that can attend a people

ple who have no ſtable foundation in their conſtitution to guard againſt the dreadful effects of internal diviſion, nor any bulwark derived from their liberty, to prevent the ravages and inſults of all the neighbouring powers. Poland has been ranſacked and diſjoined by every prince upon the Continent, and ſtands at this day a melancholy inſtance of the vague and indeterminate ſupport of a country under the ridiculous principles of a government, without a ſufficient power in the head of the ſtate to prevent the baleful effects of contention amongſt her people.

HOLLAND is denominated a republican ſtate, but the Stadtholder is an hereditary prince, the powers of the government are as abſolute as monarchy, and the people are ſlaves; and dare as ſoon attempt to break down the mounds which ſecure them from the boiſterous ocean, as to take the ſhadow of the liberty with their rulers which Engliſhmen exhibit, with the moſt unbounded effrontery, upon every tranſaction of their prince, his miniſters, and his parliament.

ROME has been ſung and ſaid into a glorious combination of the ſons of liberty; but ſhe fell a prey to the ſyſtem

ſyſtem ſhe produced. Her people, bred under the tenets of univerſal ſway, aſpired to abſolute command: they enſlaved the world; and the moſt remarkable among them for the freedom of their ſpirit, reduced her at laſt to the moſt abject ſtate of captivity. She exiſted but in conqueſt, and when that was over ſhe fell a prey to the ambitious and deſpotic principles which ſhe had infuſed into the breaſts of a race of the moſt daring, haughty, and infernal tyrants that ever diſgraced the hiſtory of mankind.

From the above ſlight glances upon the fate of a people, actuated by what is called the genuine ſpirit of liberty,

it appears that there is no ſtable foundation for the laſting welfare of a country whoſe conſtitution is erected upon the ſublime principles of democracy; that the republican is a tyrant in his heart, and that there is not a conſtitution upon earth ſo richly calculated for the real happineſs and freedom of a country, as far as liberty is conſiſtent with a deciſive and permanent diſplay of the powers of government, as the Engliſh nation. The rights of the crown of Britain are ſo tempered with a juſt and adequate controul of the people, and the powers of government are ſo blended with a neceſſary check of the ſubjects at large, that the *body politic*, if it be

not

not invaded on either ſide of the queſtion, will ſtand the ſhocks of every external oppoſition: but it is as neceſſary for the ſons of Britannia to guard the throne, as to be jealous of their rights; for the real freedom of this country depends as much upon the ſecurity of the king in his privileges, upon the deciſive exertion of the powers of government, as upon a continual, impartial, and well regulated enquiry into the tranſactions of our rulers in order to prevent the encroachments of monarchy.

Liberty ſtrained is licentiouſneſs; licentiouſneſs produces anarchy; anarchy ends in tyranny; therefore this

conſequence naturally follows, with reſpect to our *character of a republican*, that in whatever individual the principals of the republican appear to actuate his animadverſions upon the Britiſh government, he ſhould be avoided by every true Engliſhman, his clamours deſpiſed, and his pretentions to liberty ſuſpected, for he aims at acquiring abſolute dominion, and is an enemy to the beſt conſtitution in the world.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXX.

Conclusion.

IN the courſe of our Pictures of Men, Manners, and the Times, the reader will obſerve that we have confined ourſelf to the principal objects which diſtinguiſhed the character of the Engliſh nation in the year 1777, with ſuch alluſions and references to former times as might illuſtrate our remarks. He will perceive that we have had our eye invariably upon the rapid progreſs of luxury in this kingdom within the compaſs of a very

few years, and that we have ſpared neither cenſure nor ridicule in order to decry, as far as the utmoſt ſtretch of our imagination could carry us, thoſe pantomimical tranſactions which are diſplayed in the faſhionable and refined ſpheres of high life, which are imitated by the generality of the people, and which muſt haſten our deſtruction, if the preſent ſhocks and convulſions in the ſtate, occaſioned by wars and rumours of wars, do not rouſe the ſons of Britannia from the downy bed of folly and diſſipation into the ſeat of honour, into the moſt arduous and vigorous attempts to eſtabliſh their country upon the firm baſis of conqueſt and glory. He will

will likewiſe give us credit for the triſling Traits of the Country and Rural Enjoyments which we have interſperſed, occaſionally, throughout our work, and which were intended merely as a relaxation from the general tendency of our obſervations, and to enliven our ſcenery with ſomething like the charms of variety. He will perceive that we wiſhed to be as conciſe as poſſible in each of our portraits, in order that the whole of our animadverſions ſhould be compriſed in a ſmall compaſs, and that our work ſhould not intrude upon the time or patience of the public.

England

England being engaged in a moſt intereſting war with her Colonies, at the æra we drew our pictures of the times, politics neceſſarily become a particular object in our plan; and as it was manifeſted to all men that the refined ſpeculations upon liberty, which were produced in this country, and which were ſupported by a numerous part of the people, gave encouragement, comfort, and vigour to the attempts of our offspring to ſhake off the yoke of dependency, and to ſet the Mother Country at defiance, we thought it our duty, as a lover of our prince, and a well wiſher to the regular ſubordination of the ſtate,

ſtate, as by law eſtabliſhed, to promulgate our opinions and principles, and to aſſert the dignity of the Britiſh conſtitution againſt the clamour of faction and the uproar of oppoſition; and to place, in the beſt light we were able, the wicked and deſtructive tendency of a party in the community eſpouſing the cauſe of a rebellion againſt the conſtitution, which at all hazards ſhould ever be checked by the general voice of the people, as they reverence the juſt and equitable principles of their government.

In the courſe of our remarks upon the factions againſt the government, in the year 1777, we have endeavoured

to

to do juſtice to their tenets, and have not been ſparing in our attempts to correct and expoſe them, becauſe it will always be an invariable rule with us to deſpiſe and condemn any oppoſition to the Britiſh conſtitution which lays its foundation in rebellion. We are well convinced that there have been no ſtrides for abſolute dominion, in the tranſactions of government, reſpecting either Old England or America, but what have exiſted in the furious imaginations of our malecontents; and it is to them we ſhall eternally lay the heavy charge of the riſe and progreſs of the preſent war, and to them *only* the conſequences of it, ſhould it terminate in the diſgrace or deſtruction of this country.

With this obſervation we muſt take leave of the preſent foreboding conteſt, and the impending and uncertain fate of this war, with all its contingencies and conſequences as they may be derived from the vigour or relaxation of government, from victory or defeats in the field of battle, or from the neutrality or interference of the jealous and perfidious powers upon the Eaſtern Continent.

We have only to add, in our perſonal defence reſpecting our political traits, as they are exhibited in theſe volumes, one material principle which we glory in, and which has been predominant

dominant in every obſervation that we have made. But as this comes the neareſt our heart of all our preceding remarks, we ſhall announce it to the world with the emblems of the moſt profound ſolemnity.

Be it known unto all men, that the author of this work poſſeſſes no malice in his breaſt againſt any ſet, ſect, or body of men in the kingdom of Great Britain; that his perſonal acquaintance conſiſts among all orders of his majeſty's ſubjects, without diſtinction; that he loves, honours, and reveres many individuals in this country whoſe political ſentiments are diametrically oppoſite to his own; that he

he is the friend of every man, indiſcriminately, in his private capacity; but in a public view, or when the concerns of his country are at ſtake, he ſolemnly declares that he will draw the quill or the ſword upon every oppoſition to the dignity and the rights of the Engliſh conſtitution, though his beſt-beloved friends ſhould ſuffer by the vigour of his exploits.

GOD SAVE THE KING.

THE END.